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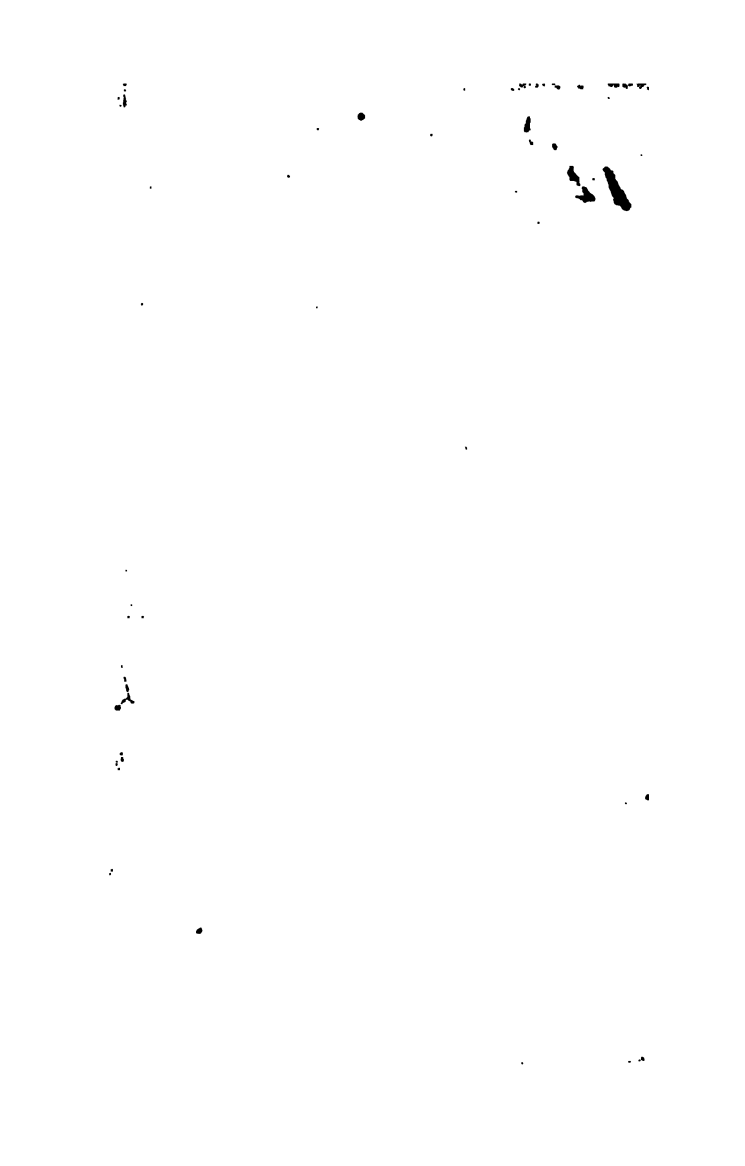
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S. Wenefride.



600038713S







THE
LIFE,
AND
MIRACLES,
OF
S. Wenefride;
Virgin, Martyr,
AND
ABBESS;
Patroness of WALES.

God is Wonderful in His Saints. *Ps.*
lxvii. v. 36.

Printed in the Year 1712.



210. m. 168.

THE
PREFACE

TO THE

Devout Pilgrims.

TIS to you, of what Degree and Condition soever, that I dedicate these few Sheets. You in equity claim a right to them; above the rest of Great Britain; because with painful, yet cheerful Steps, you measure journeys from the remotest Part of our Island, to the miraculous head of the Holy Spring; where you mix with the rapid Current warm

The Preface.

Tears of perfect Contrition, and shivering in the Stream, you look up to that Omnipotent Power, Which raised S. Wenetride to such eminent Sanctity and Glory. I have seen tender Virgins, who would look pale and tremble at a Northern Blast, sinking themselves under Water, offering their Vows and Prayers, with as great Alacrity, as if they had been partaking of the most transporting Joys upon Earth. The Interior Fire of Divine Love, got the upper hand of the Cold Element, and flaming Petitions mounted up to bring down expected Blessings. No Complaint was heard, except this pious one, That they knew little of the Merits of the Saint; only, that this was the Place of her Martyrdom, and that it was famed for Miraculous Cures, both of Soul and Body. This valua-

The Preface.

ble Consideration engag'd me to undertake what I here offer unto you, not to gratify Curiosity, but to promote Piety and Devotion.

The Life of S. Wenefride was first written by S. Elerius, who is frequently mention'd in it; from him Robertus Salopiensis collects and supplies, especially what related to the Translation of her H. Body, he being the Chief Agent in bringing the same to his Monastery. This Robert, the worthy Prior of Shrewsbury (who afterwards for his great Talents, was chosen Abbot) wrote the Saint's Life, soon after the Translation of that Treasure, which was in the Year of our Lord God, 1138. His Sincerity is much commended by Cardinal Baronius, Surius, Pitts, and Possévinus. It was penn'd by him in Latin,

The Preface.

tin, and dedicated to Guarini
Prior of Worcester, both being
the H. Order of glorious S. Ben-
dict. He tells Guarinus, that what
he presents him with, is from
Ancient and Undoubted Mon-
uments and Records of such M-
nasteries and Churches, as the
Virgin is known to have liv-
in; as also from the Depositions
venerable Priests, worthy of
Credit, for their Religious Pro-
fession, Sanctity of Life, and
great Learning. That he omits
what's less certain, as her Journ-
to Rome, and other Passages, is
sufficiently attested: So nice and
scrupulous was the good Prior not
to recommend any thing to Posterity
which was not uncontrollable Mat-
ter of fact. 'Tis true, he ought to have
observ'd the Rules of an exact Hi-
story

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historian, as to the Years of her Life, Death, and Translation, which he omitted. However out of other Classical Authors I set down the Centuries.

To proceed with greater Security, I also take for my Guide, that Learned Antiquary and Accurate Annalist, the R. F. Michael Alford, S. J. who in his 2d Tome, printed Anno 1663, treats at large this Subject: I likewise read attentively the Church History of the R. F. Serenus Cressy, set forth in the Year of our Lord 1668, who in the Preface acquaints the Reader, that altho' great part of his Volume is owing to F. Alford, he has other Ancient Records to assist him in carrying on the Work. This Religious Author, being of the H. Order of S. Benedict, I rationally supposed, that he might have such Manuscripts.

A 4

... of them Day
Relation of her Life and
they only differ in a Name
viz. Trebuih for Thew
Caradocus for Cradoc
embrued his Hands in the
King's Sacred Blood.

Doubtless you will observe
this Edition of S. Wen
life is rather to be look'd
re-impresion, with some
ments of the former Book, /
the Year 1635, by I. F.

The Preface.

Name, and Calculation of the Time when F. Alford lived, brings to my Thoughts, that very probably it was he who English'd it ; For Cressy tells me in his Preface, that altho' the mention'd Author publish'd his Tomes under the Borrow'd Names of Alford, alias Griffith, his real Paternal Name was John Flood. I owe so much Deference to the Memory of this Learned Man, whose Merits are known by his elaborate Works, and who had the perusal of the most Ancient Records of Britain, that you'll find little more than the Substance of your former Book, yet must have leave to say, that the English of it is so obsolete, and the Tacking of the Words together so much differing from the present Way of Writing, that most People desir'd it might appear something more publish'd

The Preface.

lish'd. I may add, That 'tis a difficult matter to procure a Copy; and on this account, those devoted to our Sacred Patroness, languish'd after a fresh Supply from the Press.

I have kept myself so close to the Historical Part, that altho' frequent Opportunities invited to enlarge, I absolutely refused to make any additions of my own. I have rather abbreviated, when I concluded some Periods not very material; and this to lessen Bulk. A few Occurrences are reduced to proper Places, and some Passages are added out of H. Scripture, to set in a truer light the Vertues of S. Wenefride and others. What is said of S. Beuno's Nobility, I relate out of an unquestionable Manuscript, and I presum'd that the Supplement of a few Late Miracles would add Fuel to the

The Preface.

the Fire of Devotion. You'll find me faithful to the Author ; my only Apprehension is, that I have been deficient in the Saint's due Praises. Some perchance may think that I am too liberal in the Elogium, for we are fallen into an Age of Infidelity, and we are dreadfully overrun with Deists, I wish not with Atheists too; who sap the very Foundation of Reveal'd Religion, and allow equal credit to the Alcoran and Thalmud, they do to the Old and New Testament. Such as will not believe that the Rod of Aaron commanded Screams from a Dry Rock, or that Lazarus rotting in his Tomb, return'd to Life, will droll upon St. Wenefride's Well and her Resuscitation. As if there were no Mean between too credulous a Belief, and the
Madness

The Preface.

Madness of believing nothing all, when shocking our wild Fatho' back'd with the strongest Evidence of Humane Authority.

*Others, by the Misfortune of education (whom I truly compa-
nate) will be something out of
mor, when they find undoubted A-
racles in that Church which they
reject: How the Primitive Pa-
stors, as S. Beuno, whose Feast is
celebrated on the 14th of January,
and St. Elerius's on the 13th of
June, exhorted Rich, Noble, and
Beautiful Virgins, to renounce the
World, and to consecrate themselves
wholly to their B. Redeemer, by
Religious Vows: How on this ac-
count S. Wenefride offer'd herself
a Sacrifice, to preserve her Vow'd
Virginity; which pure Oblation was
so acceptable to God, that He re-
compensed*

The Preface.

*dispensed it with such a stupendous Miracle, as neither the prece-
it (says Cressy) nor subsequent
es of the Church (save that
S. Paul's Decollation) could
ord one to equal it. These Men
unwilling to hear how S. Beuno
bis^d his Hereditary Patrimony
d Glory, to become a Poor Mini-
of the Gospel; how in the
imitive Times the H. Mass
s offer'd to the Eternal Father,
pply the Fruits of our Redemp-
n; how SS. Reliques were ho-
d, and praying for the Faithful
parted was practis'd, as S. Ele-
is confided S. Wenefride would
for his Soul, he being of opinion
at she would survive him, &c. If
ese Christian Articles are to be
aside and antiquated, by conse-
ence General Councils, Cano-
niz'd*

The Preface.

niz'd Doctors, and Ancient Histories, must be suppress'd and repeal'd, as delivering and encouraging the same Primitive Doctrine.

*Quick fought Alford foresaw it expedient, if not necessary, to solve an Objection, which some captious Criticks might glory in, viz. Why V. Bede makes no mention of glorious St. Wenefride in his History. He answers, * that Bede, Malmesbury, Huntington, and other Ancient Authors, who wrote at large of some Saints, are silent in the praise of our V. Martyr, because they only recorded the Acts and Monuments of their respective Saints and Churches. Ven. Bede in particular declares he only design'd to write the History of his own Nation, which was the English Saxon; hence he makes no mention of*

** Ad An. 660. Num. 37.*

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S. Patrick, S. Urfula, of the SS. David, Dubritius, Kentigern, who were illustrious Lights of the British Church. Alford adds, That there being an irreconcilable separation betwixt the Britains and Saxons, not only as to Distance of Place, but likewise as to Tempers and Affections, all manner of Commerce was interdicted; insomuch that Ven. Bede, who liv'd and dy'd in the North of England, could not have such certain Knowledge of what pass'd in the West, as to insert it in his History.

In this little Undertaking I look'd on my self as a Debtor to the Unwise, as well as to the Wise *; therefore in handling the Subject, I avoided all quaint and uncommon Expressions, as might require Study in the Vulgar. Plainness

* Rom. I. xiv.

grims) yet before I take
most humbly and earnest
charitable Remembrance
Well, and I faithfully as
a grateful Return. We are
Passengers in this World
more than Strangers and
upon Earth. Let us unite
for a happy Finishing of our
that after this Mortal Pilgrimage
we may safely arrive at the
Fountain of Eternal Life
we shall be inebriated

THE
L I T A N I E S
O F
S. Wenefride,
V I R G I N
A N D
Martyr.

Printed in the Year 1712.



(3)
THE
LITANIES
OF
S. Wenefride.



Lord, have mercy upon us.
 Christ, have mercy upon us.
 Lord, have mercy upon us.
 God the Father of Heaven, have mercy upon
 us.
 God the Son, Redeemer of Mankind, have
 mercy upon us.
 God the Holy Ghost, have mercy upon us.
 Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy upon us.
 Holy *Mary*,
 Holy Mother of God,
 Holy Virgin of Virgins,
 O Blessed *S. Wenefride*,
 O Humble and Mild Virgin,
 O Glorious Spouse of Christ,
 O Devout and Charitable Virgin,
 O Sweet Comforter of the Afflicted,
 O Singular Example of Chastity,
 O Radiant Star.
 O *Fairest Flower of the British Nation*,

Pray for us.

O Admirable and Elected Vessel,
 O Mirror of Chastity,
 O Mirror of Devotion,
 O Mirror of Piety,
 O Bright Lamb of Sanctity,
 O Golden Image of Angelical Purity,
 O Hope and Safety of Distressed Pilgrims,
 That we may be delivered from all Iniquity,
 That we may be delivered from all Disorder'd Passions of the Mind,
 That we may be delivered from the Deceits of the World, Flesh, and Devil,
 That we may be delivered from all Occasions of Sin,
 That we may be delivered from Plague, Famine and War,
 That we may be delivered from the Wrath of God and Eternal Damnation,
 That we and all Sinners may have true Contrition, and full Remission of our Sins,
 That all Schismatics, Hereticks, and Infidels, may be converted to the Holy Catholick and Apostolical Faith.
 That we may always hate Sin, and overcome all Temptations,
 That we may despise all worldly Vanities and Delights,

That

(5)

That we all may ever fear God, and
fulfil his Holy Will,
That we may have both Spiritual and
Corporal Health,
That we may devoutly affect Chastity
and Purity of Life,
That we may fervently love Humility
and Mildness.
That we may delight in Pious Prayer,
Fasting, and Charitable Alms,
That we may discreetly and fervently
continue in the Exercise of Godliness,
That we may chearfully and constantly
suffer for the Love of Christ,
That the Souls in Purgatory, and all
Afflicted Persons, may obtain hea-
venly Consolations,
That our Benefactors, and all that la-
bour to save Souls, may be blessed
with abundance of Grace, and e-
verlasting Life,
That we may enjoy true Peace, and
endless Felicity,
That God of his abundant Mercy will
vouchsafe to bless this our Pilgrim-
mage,
That by thy Pious Intercession it may
be to the perfect Health of our Souls
and Bodies,
That thou wilt vouchsafe to grant our
Requests,
O Blessed *Wenefride,*

O Holy Virgin, and Martyr, Pray for us.

Let

O Blessed S. *Wenefride*,
 virgin and Martyr
 beautified with the Pu-
 rare Purity of thy Inno-
 has so specially chosen,
 ed, and so wonderfully
 gain, graceing thee with
 Living Martyr, causing
 lously to spring, bearing
 mory of thy Name, for
 scased and distressed Pilgrims
 voutly beg thy powerful
 Blessed S. *Wenefride*, hear
 receive the humble Supp-
 poor devoted Pilgrims, at
 thy Pious Intercession
 Amen



*The Life, Martyr-
dom, and Mira-
cles of St. Wene-
fride, &c.*

MAny are the evident
Motives of *Credi-
bility*, clearly distin-
guishing the Un-
spotted Church of *Jesus Christ*
from Heterodox Persuasions,
which are built on Private
Fancy, and for the most part
on Faction. Among the rest,
B consummate

the Universe, in
Faith, instructe
that the *Spouse*
chas'd with t
His most Sacred
I believe in the
Church. Other
ing to Religion
speak more prop
to agreeable Lil
powerfully invites
over vast Crowds
felytes. As to m:

Saint Wenefride. 3

Wonders, than He wrought Himself. * The Life of S. *Wenefride* is very conspicuous, as to Both these genuine Marks, Of *Miracles*, and *Sanctity*; as it will more clearly appear, by her wonderful Actions, and the several Steps by which she arrived at so high a State of Perfection.

In the Seventh Age after Man's Redemption, flourish'd many *Saints* of Both Sexes. I shall only mention those chiefly concern'd in this short History. Saint *Beuno*, the Glorious Instrument of Saint *Wenefride*'s Second Life, and Sanctity, was born of Noble Parents in *Montgomery-shire*, at the Fall of the River *Rhym* into

B 2

Severn,

* St. John, xiv. 12.

Severn, therefore call'd *Aberhyw*. His Father *Binsi* descended lineally from *Cadell*, Prince of *Gleswig*, and his Mother derived her Pedigree from *Anna* (who was marry'd to the King of the *Picts*) Sister to the Mighty and Renown'd King *Arthur*, who departed happily this Life, and was interr'd at *Glastenbury*, in the Year 542. His Grandfather was Saint *Gundeleius*, and he was near related to several Eminent Saints; amongst the rest, he was Cousin German to Saint *Kentegern*, Bishop of *Glasgow*, who, forc'd from *Scotland*, founded the Bishoprick of *St. Asaph*, from his Disciple of that Name, whom he left to govern that Church.

Young

Saint Wenefride. 5

Young *Beuno* was educated under the Direction of a Holy Man call'd Saint *Dangesius*, and he advanced so fast in Perfection, that he spent Two or Three Days and Nights in continual Prayer, so that he was drawn with Reluctancy to refresh fainting Nature. He took an early Surfeit of Worldly Vanity, he renounced the flattering Allurements of Terrene Pleasures, and exchanged the glittering Grandeur of an opulent Fortune for the poor Habit of a Monk; resolving to spend the Remainder of his Days in the Practice of Evangelical Counsels. Being well settled, and thoroughly grounded in the Apostolical Institute, he observed the following laudable

dable Practice, to promote the Honour of his *Creator*. When he had built a Church and Monastery, and there establish'd Regular Discipline, he remov'd to some other Part of the Country to perform the like Duty to God. So that in few Years he became a Common Father to numerous *Religious*, who respected him as their Holy Founder.

This zealous Monk having finish'd his Monastery at *Clynoc Vaws* in *Carnarvonshire*, found himself powerfully inspir'd to visit his Relations in *Flintshire*. 'Tis true, he had long before bid *adieu* to all Ties of Flesh and Blood, but he understood this Call, as a Voice from Heaven. A rich and potent
Lord

Saint Wenefride. 7

Lord in that Part of *North Wales*, where now *Holy-Well* is, had marry'd the Vertuous and Noble Lady *Wenlo*, Sister to Saint *Beuno*. His Name was *Thewith*, some write him *Trebwith*; but a Manuscript now before me, of one of the eruditeſt Antiquaries of the Laſt Age, ſays his Name was *Tyvid*. Theſe Parents of St. *Wenefride*, by an Exemplar and truly *Chriſtian* Life, ſurpaſs'd their High Extraction. They reckon'd ſolid Vertue as the moſt diſtinguiſhing Quality, and they pity'd Vicious Potentates, who are Contemptible in the Eyes of the *King of Kings*. Saint *Wenefride*, the Glory of *West Britain*, was born in the troubleſome Reign

B. 4

of

of King *Cadwallawn* ; and Saint *Beuno* made his Visit to his Brother in Law's House, in the Reign of King *Eluith*, the Second of that Name. The Venerable *Monk*, having with much Humility, and great Modesty, made himself known, he told them, That he was sent by *Almighty God*, to honour Him there, as he had done in other Places ; and that he neither expected, nor craved any other Favour, than a small Parcel of his large Territories, sufficient to build a Church on ; *where others, with my self* (said he) *will daily pray for your Safety and Happiness.*

Thewith (I shall style him so for the future) was not in the miserable Catalogue of those thoughtless,

Saint Wenefride. 9

thoughtless, blind Worldlings, who are prodigal in Vanity and Ostentation, but start and frown at the first Proposal of parting with small Matters for the Advantage of their Souls. No, he look'd forward with other Eyes, towards a more Permanent Being, than here upon sordid Earth; therefore return'd the following Answer: *With good reason, Holy Father, I am oblig'd to give you part of the Lands I now possess, for His Sake and Service, Who bestow'd them all upon me. You have pleasur'd me, in asking this Charity, which is more advantageous to me than to you, who propose it. Therefore from this very Day, I do absolutely alienate from my self, and my Posterity, this*

Manor I now live in, and with joy, I surrender unto you all my Right and Title, and I put you into possession. I humbly beg a Favour, that having One only Child, a tender Virgin, who is my special Comfort, you'll instruct her in Heavenly Documents, that her Life and Conversation may be Holy, Pleasing to God, and Joyful to her Parents. After this generous Settlement, the Nobleman made choice of a Dwelling Seat, not far distant from the Place he had given to St. Beuno; where, on a Hill, he could see the Church, where the Servants of God prais'd their Maker.

As Constantine the Great, at the Building of Saint Peter's Basilica, divesting himself of his

Saint Wenefride. 11

his Imperial Robes, took up the Spade, broke Ground, and carry'd Twelve Baskets of Earth, in honour of the 12 Apostles, to cast into the Foundation, in testimony of his Devotion to the Primitive Princes of *Christianity*; so in imitation of this Heroic Pattern, the Noble Lord *Themith* set aside State and Birth, many times putting *his own Hands* to the Holy Work. This he did to encourage others, and to contribute in some sort to the finishing of the Fabrick. The Church being made fit to offer in it the *Divine Sacrifice*, he and his Spouse, with their only Child, were daily present at *Holy Mass*. They had this Pious Custom, to place their Daughter

Daughter at the *Saint's* Feet, at the time of his Exhortations to the People, advising her to give attention to his Excellent Doctrine. This was not necessary, altho' religiously suggested by Pious Parents; for she was so much transported with a Holy Delight in hearing him preach, that she frequently visited him alone, to discourse of Self-Knowledge, and *Christian* Performances.

'Twas her Parents Intention to marry her to some Nobleman of the Country, and to bestow on her a most plentiful Fortune; but her Ever Blessed *Redeemer*, in those tender Years, was disposing her sweetly for His Service. By Saint *Beuno's* frequent Discourses,

Saint Wenefride. 13

courses, she understood, how Great, how Good, and how Glorious, the Heavenly Spouse was; that voluntary Virgins are like *Angels* upon Earth; that *they follow the Lamb, wherever He goes* *. That the Honours of the World are vain, and its Pleasures short lived; so that *the very Thought of a Terrene Husband became hateful unto her*. Wherefore she resolv'd to keep her self undefil'd, and to consecrate her pure Virginity to the Lord of Heaven and Earth. One main Difficulty occur'd, how to render her Parents favourable to this Heavenly Call. She burned with the Love of God, and at the same time she resolv'd to fulfil the Commandment

* Apoc. xiv.

ment of *Honouring Father and Mother*. In this Struggle betwixt Divine Vocation and *Christian Duty*, the *Bestower* of all Lights put her into a *Method*, how to prepare the Way towards her Happiness, by making use of *Saint Beuno*, as a Glorious Instrument.

This *Holy Man* was honour'd as a Saint by her *Parents*, and by consequence she knew very well, that he had great Power and Authority with them, and they would not reject any reasonable Request made by him, such as she took hers to be. Impatient of losing time, for compleating her Design, having found him one Day alone, and at liberty, she acquainted him with the Holy Fruits of his

Saint Wenefride. 15

his moving Discourses, and after a very pathetick manner, humbly petition'd for his zealous Concurrence, in preserving the rich Treasure of her Virginity, which she resolved never to part with, for all the Offers the flattering World could make her. *S. Beuno* was agreeably surpris'd at this most welcome News; for, as *S. Paul*, he desir'd all *to be like unto himself* *. He had unshaken Confidence in God's Power and Goodness, that He Who had begun the Work, would give it the Finishing Stroke. Moreover, being no Stranger to the singular Piety of those he was to treat with, he cheerfully undertook the Task, to the unexpressible

* 1 Cor. xi. 1.

pressible Satisfaction of the expecting Virgin.

We cannot read without flowing Tears, how Faithful *Abraham*, in obedience to God's Command, had his Hand lifted up to sacrifice his Son *Isaac*, his *Only Begotten Son*, whom he lov'd *; not so much as demurring at the first Intimation of the *Omni-potent*; perchance it may move us to Devotion, by a serious Consideration, how the Lord *Thewith* entertain'd this unexpected Petition of his dear *Child*. Besides the Internal Gifts of Grace, and apparent Vertues, which charm'd her devout Parents, her Stature was well proportion'd, her Face was matchless, her Modesty equalled

* Gen. xxii. 2.

Saint Wenefride. 17

led her Beauty, Qualifications much admir'd by Mankind. She was the agreeable Object of their Eyes, the Support of their Family, and the Prospect of their Happiness upon Earth. Yet no sooner had Saint *Beuno* deliver'd his Sentiments, as to the Nature of the *Offering*; That it was a sort of *Holocaust* to sacrifice their Affections, and to bequeath to their God the dearest Creature in the World, whom they loved more than they did themselves; with other persuasive Reasons to the same effect. The Holy Man, I say, had no sooner ended his Discourse, but contrary to the Weakness of other fond Parents, Tears of Joy came trickling down Lord *Themith's*

Thewith's Cheeks, who w
 his *Spouse*, broke out into
 Praises of *Jesus Christ*, for
 highly favouring their o
Child. They then call'd
 their Daughter, and gave
 full and free leave to for
 the World, wishing her a h
 py Progress in the Way of I
 fection. They likewise decla
 That the *Heavenly Spouse*
 ving made choice of her, t
 intended to make Him Hei
 what they design'd for
 Dowry, by disposing of
 same, to His greater Hono
 in Pious and Religious U
 They drew also this Advant
 to themselves, of renounc
 the World, so far as was c
 sistent with Persons in th
 Station. They enter'd int
 f

Saint Wenefride. 19

Her Resolution of giving to the Poor great part of their princely Wealth, of retiring from Worldly Noise and Hurry, that with an undepending freedom, they might be more absolute Masters of short time, to provide, and send before them never ending Treasures to Heaven.

The Pious Virgin receiving this coveted Grant, concluded that she could never return sufficient Thanks to God for the Favour. She watch'd whole Nights in the Church, either kneeling or prostrate before the Altar, where she imagined to see herself, that she was in her Immortal Spouse's Presence Chamber. Contemplation rais'd her up into Admiration of His Infinite

finite Perfections; so that to hear *Jesus Christ* only named, brought joyful Tears into his Eyes from a flaming Heart Pure Delights overflow'd his Soul; and looking toward Heaven, the World appear'd base and contemptible. To add Fuel to this pleasing Fire she procur'd a little Orator near unto Saint *Beuno's* Cell to visit him with greater Ease in the Day time, and in silent Night, to practise her *Master's* Spiritual Lessons.

The implacable *Enemy* of Mankind, suspecting that such high Beginnings of Perfection in tender Years, might prove a powerful Invitation to other Noble *Virgins*, of despising themselves and the World employ'd

saint Wenefride. 21

oy'd one of his incarnate
aries, to defeat the Design
e Holy Ghost. What *Hell*
ot effect, by its own im-
ate Suggestions, it too
ently brings about, by
nsinuating Arguments of
l Mortals. Wherefore,
as induce others to forfeit
ie Grace by Mortal Sin,
etestable Instruments of re-
ous *Lucifer.* As the *Devil put*
he Heart of Judas Iscariot to
y the *Son of God **, so he
an impure Flame into the
t of *Gradocus*, King *Alen's*
to commit a sacrilegious
upon *Christ's* Lovely
e. He was sottishly ena-
d with the Charms of her
on, not casting an eye on
the

the Beauty of her Vertues ; waited for an Opportunity, gratify his Brutish Passion which thus happen'd. On Sunday, Saint *Wenefride's* Parents being gone to Church before her, and she for a short space detain'd at home on Charitable Account, soon follow after ; the Prince having intelligence, enter'd the House, under pretence of Business with the Lord *Thewi*. At first, the Holy *Maid*, not all suspecting his Insincerity or Design, receiv'd him very courteously, with an humble Apology of her Unworthiness to entertain one of his Royal Birth : *But if you please (said she) to repose your self in a convenient Room, till Dir*

Saint Wenefride. 23

*Service is ended, my Father will
be at liberty to serve you. To
this candid and obliging An-
swer of the bashful Virgin,
Cradocus, now more than ever
inflamed with sinful Desires,
reply'd in the greatest Disor-
der, That nothing cou'd be
more agreeable than to stay in
her Company, since it was
then solely in her power to
make him happy. If she com-
ply'd with the ardent Desires
of a passionate Lover, she
might expect all the Happiness
his Power and Quality was ca-
pable of bestowing upon her.*

*Altho' the Virgin blush'd
and trembled at the Immode-
sty of this wicked Proposal,
yet being perfectly present to
her self, in the dangerous Oc-
casion,*

caſion, and fortify'd with Divine Grace and Light from Heaven, ſhe answer'd; That there was not the leaſt doubt to be made of enjoying Honours, Wealth, and Worldly Happineſs, by being eſpous'd to ſo Noble a *Prince*; that ſhe was in great Confuſion, to be ſo ſuddenly ſurprized, in ſuch mean Attire, not becoming his Preſence: *Wherefore, permit me (ſaid ſhe) to enter my Chamber, adjoining to this, to better my Dreſs.* Cradocus in the heat of his Paſſion, unwillingly gave ear to the Virgin's Petition, yet could not reſuſe a Requeſt accompany'd with ſo much Modesty, and ſeeming Deference to his Quality. She no ſooner got clear of ſo impudent a
Guest,

Saint Wenefride. 25

quest, but slipping out privately by another Door, she immediately ran towards the Church, sure of meeting with protection there from so Vilainous an Attempt. Meanwhile, the Prince impatient of so long a delay, and not without some Suspicion of what had happened, rush'd into the Room, to which she retir'd; not finding her there, he pursued her so eagerly, that he overtook her on the descent of the Hill before she cou'd gain the Church. There with drawn Sword in his Hand, and with Fury in his Face, he threatens to separate her Head from her Body, unless she quickly consented to his Will.

C

Here

Here methinks appear'd
lively Representation of
Anguish and *Perplexities*
every side, of Chast Susan
whose Honour and Conscience
was attempted by the
Lascivious Judges. If she
consented, 'twas Death to her,
if she did not, she would
escape their Hands *. The
ble Israelite, came to this
Resolution, 'Tis better for
without the Act, to fall into
Hands, than to Sin in the
of our Lord. Oh! That
Christians, had such a Horrour,
Detestation of *Mortal Sin*,
look upon it, as more
deous and Frightful than
violent Death. St. Wenef
was of that settled Opin

* Dan. xiii. 22.

Saint Wenefride. 27

she had Two sorts of Deaths,
waiting for an Answer, a separation of the Soul from the Body, or a Separation of the Soul from God, she did not ballance upon the Matter, but Undauntedly, and Heroically reply'd; How, by her Parents Approbation, she was Holily Espous'd to the Son of God, who infinitely exceeds all Power and Beauty upon Earth, that she would be Faithful, and Constant in her pure Affections, and rather lose her Life, than to admit any Corridor. Neither shall your Menaces, and Terroures, (said she) draw me from the Sweetness of His Love, nor so overawe me, as to make me recede in the least, from Executing what I have promis'd.

As it happens sometimes, that despis'd carnal Love, turns into Rage, so it fared with Barbarous *Cradocus*, who seeing himself scorn'd (as he thought) gave such a deadly Blow to the *Virgin's* Neck, that the first Stroke sever'd the Head from the Body : Which falling upon the descent of the Hill rowl'd down to the Church, where the Congregation was Kneeling before the *Altar*. As they were terrify'd, with the Bloody Object of her Head, so they were astonish'd, to behold a clear and rapid Spring, gushing out of that Spot of Ground, her Head *had first fallen upon*, which to this very Day, is Visited from all Parts, by *Devout Pilgrims*. The Place of

Saint Wenefride. 29

her Martyrdom, had before her Death, the Name of the *Dry Valley*, or *Barren Bottom*, which was changed into the Title of *Finhon*, which in Old *Welsh*, signifies, a *Fountain*, or *Well*. 'Twas also observ'd, that the Stones of the Well, were Tinctur'd with Drops, as it were of Blood, to perpetuate the Memory of what she had shed for the Love of *Christ*, and in Process of Time, 'twas taken Notice of, that the Moss growing round the *Well*, had a very fragrant Smell, as an Emblem of the Odour of her Angelical Vertues.

To close the last Act, of this Inhumane Tragedy, and to relate the dreadful Stroke of Divine Justice, on the Cruel

The Life of

Tyrant, we are to premise with Brevity; that the just Grief of the Holy Virgin's Parents, is not to be express'd, seeing their Dear Child, so Villainously Butcher'd, almost before their Eyes. St. Raimo's Vertue was also put to the Test, to bear with true Resignation the Loss of so Devout a Creature. Tears came trickling down his Cheeks, at the Sight of the horrid Murther. The Afflicted People with united Voices, call'd upon Heaven for speedy Execution against him, who had committed that heinous Outrage. Indignation accompanied Compassion, when they beheld the unrelenting Assassin, wiping his Blood Sword upon the Grass, as gloryi

Saint Wenefride. 31

glorying in the detestable Fact,
without any Fear of God, or
Man. Saint Beuno was prepa-
ring to offer the *Unbloody Sa-*
crifice of our Redemption; but
being inspir'd by Him, Who
declar'd, *Revenge to Me, and I*
*will repay it **; he left the Al-
tar, and taking the B. Martyr's
Head into his trembling Hands,
he mounted the Ascent to-
wards *Cradocus*. He fear'd not
such a Blow as was given to
the tender Virgin; on the
same account for the Love of
Christ, he would have bid it
welcome. Faithful Servants of
God dread nothing, Sin only
excepted. Being come up to
him, he said: *Thou wicked*
Man! Who without any regard to

C 4

Innocence,

* Deut. xxxii. 35.

The Life of
Innocence, or Beauty, has massacred a Princely Virgin, no less nobly born than thy self. Nor dost thou repent, or seem sorry, as thou oughtest to do, for this horrid Sacrilege. I here beseech my Heavenly Lord, that for an Example to others, He will please to execute His Divine Judgment against thee, who has murdered His Spouse, troubled His People, violated His Sabbath, and besprinkled this Holy House with Blood, which I consecrated to His Service. As the Earth swallow'd up rebellious and perverse Corah, so some affirm, that at St. Beuno's last Words, Cradocus not only dropp'd down dead; but also that the Earth open'd, to give passage to the
luxurious

Saint Wenefride. 33

luxurious Body to sink towards
is Monstrous Soul, or that the
Master whom he had served,
he Devil, carry'd it off; for it
is certain, that the Carcass of
the cruel Murtherer never af-
terwards appear'd.

The *Faithful* glorify'd God in
His Justice, but could not curb
their Grief. Saint *Beuno* ear-
nestly exhorted the Parents
and People to turn from La-
mentations, and to address the
Creator of Souls, and *Raiser* up
of Dead Bodies, that as He
had commanded back *Lazarus*
to Life, rotting in his Monu-
ment, so, to His greater Ho-
nor and Glory, and for the
Comfort of the sorrowful Pa-
rents, who had so generously
dedicated this Darling Child to

His Service, He would graciously vouchsafe to restore her to Life. He then join'd the Sacred Head to the Pale Body, covering both with his Cloak, after which, he offer'd up the Holy *Sacrifice* of our Salvation.

After *Mass* was ended, he lifting up his Hands to Heaven, made the following Prayer. O Lord Jesus Christ! For *Whose* sake, this Holy Virgin condemn'd the World, and languish'd after Thee; by the Tender Bowels of thy Mercy, Love, and Bounty, be graciously pleas'd to grant us the Effect of our Vows and Prayers, humbly offer'd unto Thee. We are fully persuaded, that this Godly Virgin, who liv'd holily, and dy'd for Thee with great Constancy, is now highly exalted, and wants

Saint Wenefride. 35

*more the Society of us Mortal
d Miserable Creatures. Yet to
manifest Thy Omnipotence and Su-
reme Dominion, which Thou hast
over Souls and Bodies, which are
ever dead to Thy Power of re-
viving them; as also to multi-
ply the Merits of that Soul, whose
body lies here before us: We crave
Second Life for her; to the end,
at after a long and plentiful
harvest, laden and enrich'd with
new Merits, she may return unto
thee, her Eternal Spouse, and the
belov'd of her Heart; Who with
the Father and the Holy Ghost,
rulest on Earth, and reignest in
heaven, for ever and ever.
The Pious People, drown'd in
tears, having with Sighs and
loving Sobbs, answer'd de-
voutly, Amen; the Virgin a-
rose,*

rose, as newly awaked
Sleep. She wiped her
and Face, to clear away
Glorious Dust, which ha-
tled on her Lovely Head,
it tumbled towards her
Saint *Beuno*. The Decol
of Saint *Wenefride* is ce-
ted on the 22d of *June*.

Contemplate here
Reader) the Joy and Ad-
tion, which then trans-
all present, at this won-
Miracle. Tears burst out
plentifully, but flowing
different Cause. They
nify'd and blest'd the B-
less Goodness of her
God, every one resolving
with the *Saint*, to a Ne-
of reforming their past
One Particular in this f

Saint Wenefride. 37

ng Resuscitation is very remarkable, *viz.* When her *Parents*, and others, fix'd their Eyes upon her Neck, they observ'd a *Pure White Circle*, no larger than a small Thread, quite round it, denoting the place, where the Separation had been made; which always after remained. From this, the great Veneration of the People for her, changed her Name, which was *Brewa*, into that of *Wenefride*. *Wen* in the Old *British* Tongue signifies *White*, and other Letters were by an Alteration added to this syllable, to render more agreeable the Sound of the New Name. In the many Apparitions after her Second Death, when she shewed her
self

self to her Devout Clients, they always took special Notice of the aforesaid *White Circle*, which intimated to them the indelible Mark of her *Spouse's* Affection, for suffering that Mortal Wound so courageously for His sake.

Permit me here to break off for a while the Thread of this Discourse, by a short but necessary Digression; in order to obviate the Cavils of some Modern Incredulous Criticks, who seem now adays to entertain such strange Notions of these Supernatural Works of Almighty God, that they believe nothing that suits not exactly with the fanciful Ideas of their own Brain. These Refiners will be apt, not only to carp at what is here related,

Saint Wenefride. 39

lated concerning this Holy Virgin's Return to Life, but perhaps also turn to ridicule what follows hereafter, of her sending Presents to *S. Beuno* by the Current of the Miraculous Fountain; and several other wonderful things, contain'd in the following Pages. As it would be highly criminal to pretend to fathom the Wisdom of God by our shallow Capacities, or to confine His Omnipotence to the bounded Limits of the greatest Power upon Earth; so it would be Madness in us to believe every thing, without rational Grounds and sufficient Authority. But when we find such Instances of the Infinite Power and Goodness of Almighty God, as we have
here

here in this History, recorded by Learned and Pious Witnesses, and handed down to Posterity by an uninterrupted Tradition, for several Ages together, and never question'd till these our Days. It is the Duty of every Rational Man and Pious *Christian*, rather to acknowledge the Goodness of God, Who appeared Wonderful in these His Works, than dispute His Power by cavilling at Facts, only because they seem to shock his foolish Imagination. To condescend to the Weakness of future Ages, Divine Providence seems to have taken particular care we shou'd not want undoubted Examples of this Nature, to facilitate our Belief. We know
the

Saint Wenefride. 41

the * Prophet *Elizeus* call'd
back to life the Son of the *Su-*
namite. † Saint *Peter* rais'd
Tabitha, and Saint *Paul* the
Young Man that fell from the
Window. Again, (a) When
the Sons of the Prophets were
cutting down Wood on the
Banks of the River *Jordan*,
the Head of One of the Axes
fell into the Water. The H. Pro-
phet *Elizeus* cutting a Piece of
Wood, in Form of a Handle
to it, cast it into the River.
The Iron immediately, con-
trary to its Nature, came from
the Bottom, and join'd the
Wood. If some of our Mo-
dern Criticks, who pretend to
more Wit than Religion, durst
publish their profane Notions

ON

* 4 Kings, iv. † Act. ix, 20. (a) 4 Kings, vi.

“ Bottom of the River
“ for, and by what
“ found out the P
“ Wood swimming on
“ face of the Waters?
“ ther the Recovery of
“ Head of an Ax, was
“ ter of such Importan
“ God should think fit
“ ploy His Omnipoter
“ working so great a M
“ to find it? ” But to
all such profane Reason

Saint Wenefride. 43

ided they should be stamp'd
with *Divine* Truth, and deli-
er'd down to all Ages to
come, in the very Word of
God it self.

Is it harder to believe that a
little light Bundle shou'd float
pon the Sea, and arrive safe in
Creek, near unto which Saint
Wenefride then lived, without the
least Damage, than that the
head of an Ax, a lumpish
piece of Iron, shou'd swim
pon the Surface of the Wa-
ters of the River *Jordan*, and
in a Piece of Wood thrown
after it, in Form of a Han-
dle? Without doubt Both Facts
so wonderful, Both Miracles.

I know there is a very wide,
and as I may say, an infinite
disparity between *Miracles* re-
gister'd.

of Witnesses, and den
down to us by the u
fal Belief of all Ages, as
Case before us, of our S
being rais'd to life by the
ers of Saint *Beuno*, and
Manner she sent Preser
him afterwards; it wou
as unpardonable in a Ra
Man to refuse his Assent,
deny that there ever wa
a Person in the World as
Cæsar, or that whatever

Saint Wenefride. 45

the Incredulous mutter; all Good *Christians* know, that the Son of God, Who neither can nor will deceive, has made this Infallible Promise to His Church, That He will be with her *to the End of the World* *, and that they who believe in Him, shall not only do the Works He did, but even *Greater than those shall they do* †. Can the Hand of God be shorten'd? Or, Can His Goodness receive any Diminution? No, no, Your Omnipotence, O Lord, is still the same, and of Your Mercies there is no End.

Whatever this incredulous Age may think of this great Miracle of our Saint's Return to Life; it appear'd so evident

to

* Mat. xxviii, 20. Joh. xiv, 12.

to the *West Britains*, and redounded so much to the Honour of God's Church, Saint *Beuno's* Sanctity, and the power he had with his *Creator*, that many *Pagan People*, remaining in those Parts, came to hear the *Holy Man's* Instructions in the *Catholick Faith*, and to receive Baptism.

S. Wenefride according to her former Practice, like *Mary* at the Feet of *Christ*, sat on a Low Seat before him. She was never fatiated with the Heavenly *Manna*, which fell from his Angelical Tongue. She counted as nothing what she had already done, or suffer'd, and restless to be more strictly united to her Beloved Spouse, she aspir'd to the Height of Perfection.

Wherefore

Saint Wenefride. 47

Wherefore she most humbly
Begg'd upon her Knees, to be
solemnly veil'd (according to
the Custom of the Primitive
Ages) that by entering into a
Religious Course of Life, she
might put *Hell* to greater Con-
fusion, which had fiercely at-
tempted to dishonour *God* and
her self: But mostly, that she
might pour forth her Soul in
the Presence of her Eternal
Spouse, with a flaming and dis-
engaged Heart, entirely His,
and say; *Behold I have left all
things, and have follow'd Thee* *.

St. Beuno with Tears of Joy,
comply'd with this Religious
Request, and perform'd the
Ceremony in a numerous As-
sembly. He knew to what a
Degree

* *St. Mat. xix. 27.*

Degree of Sanctity the Spirit of *God* would raise her, for His own Glory, and the Improvement of others; therefore he spent whole Days in cultivating her Soul, in what regarded a *Religious State*. She, as an apt Scholar, took in so fast the frequent Lessons, and put them in practice so punctually, that it struck her Master into Admiration. He finding her so far advanc'd in an interior Life, that she was even able to direct and govern others in the Way to Perfection; one Day he call'd for her *Parents*, and after the following Manner deliver'd unto them his Sentiments and Resolutions.

Saint Wenefride. 49

As you (said he) have most liberally bestow'd a Church and House for the Service of God, and for the Help and Benefit of the Faithful, so His Divine Majesty, has more than sufficiently requited your Charity, by conferring on you Spiritual Favours, but more especially on your Child, whom for the the time to come, you may follow as a safe Guide, in our Blessed Redeemer's Service. I am call'd on by Heaven, to another Place; and I leave you to the Grace and Goodness of God, and to the rare Example of your Daughter. Then turning to Saint Wenefride, he said, Our Lord, Dear Child, has appointed you to succeed in my Labours. March on in the Way of Vertue, as I have taught you, and guide

D

others

The Life of

others on the Road to Eternal Life,
 Gather in this very Place, for
 your Heavenly Spouse, many Pure
 and Devout Virgins; but know
 withal, that here you shall not end
 your Days; for after the Term of
 Seven Years, spent by you in
 Prayer and Austerities, for your
 own Merits, and Edification o
 others, our Gracious Lord wi
 summon you to another Place, th
 Strangers may be instructed by yo
 and come to the true Knowled
 and Service of Him, for Wh
 sake you fell a Victim of Purity
 When the Ancients of Ep
 fus had heard Saint Paul
 clare unto them, that
 should see no more his Face,* t
 fell upon his Neck, and there
 great Weeping. In like m

* Act. xx. 25.

Saint Wenefride. 51

ner, when Saint *Wenefride* was acquainted by her admir'd *Master*, that she should not see him any more in this World, a lawful Grief seem'd to overwhelm her. To comfort her in such deep Affliction, Saint *Beuno* took her by the Hand, and led her to the Chrystalline Fountain, the Place of her Martyrdom ; where they sitting together on a Stone, bearing to this Day, the Name of *Saint Beuno's Stone*, and which lieth now in the Outward Well ; You see (said he) the Monument here of your Sufferings. Behold also the Stones, as tinctur'd with your Blood, which was shed for the Glory of your Heavenly Spouse. Be you therefore attentive, and mindful of

*what I do foretel you, concerning
Three special Favours, which
your Glorious Spouse Jesus Christ
will hereafter honour you
and by your Prayers, benefit on
The First is, That these Black
Spots shall never be wash'd
from the said Stones, but
remain, as triumphant Signs
of your Blood, spilt in defence
of your Chastity. The Second
is, That any Person who
devoutly ask Temporal Blessings,
or Freedom from Spiritual
or Corporal Distresses
be obtain'd by your Merits
Intercession, the same shall
compass his Request, if it be
to the Honour and Glory of
God, by paying their Devotions
three times at this manner
If what he petitions for be*

Saint Wenefride. 53

for the Advantage of his Soul,
and therefore is not granted;
at his Death by your Prayers
he shall reap more ample
Fruit, and in the Next World
Everlasting Blessings. *The Third,*
That after my Departure into
a more remote Part of this
Island, God will give me a Cell
near unto the Sea Shore; so
that whenever you send any
Letters or Tokens to me, as I
intreat you to do at least once
every Year, only cast them in-
to the Stream of this *Fountain*,
and they will come safe unto
me. *Which Wonders will be glo-
riously divulged of you, to the End
of the World.*

He then conducted her back
to the Church; where he ad-
ded: *Behold this Church, and*

D. 3. *Buildings*

... by your Pious
ctions and Exemplar L
put in practice those Divi
sons, which I have often d
unto you; that is, The Co
of the World, and an ent
negation of themselves; w
the Foundation of Religio
fection. Strive therefore,
Child, in all things to e
your self as a lively Patte
Vertue. As to my poor s
will go whither the Spirit of
th

Saint Wenefride. 55

To experience the racking
ffects of a rational Sorrow,
nothing derogatory to solid
ertue. The *Holy* of *Holies*
ot only groan'd; but wept at
he Tomb of *Lazarus* *, and
e shed Tears upon *Jerusalem*
, for the future Calamities of
hat obstinate *City*, which
ould not know the *time* of
s Visitation. The Royal *Pro-*
phet, a Man according to *God's*
own Heart, upon taking his
ist farewell of his beloved *Jo-*
athas, they wept together,
as David more (a). It must
ot then seem strange, that
he tender Heart of this dole-
ul *Virgin*, was ready to split
sunder with Grief, at the last

Adieu

* St. John xi. 35. † St. Luke xix. 41.
1) 2 Reg. xx. 41.

Adieu, in this World. The more he attempted to sweeten this bitter Separation, his charming Words caused her swelling Sorrow to float higher; insomuch, that when she saw him, with his Staff in his Hand, ready to depart, she rated the approaching Loss, as the heaviest Cross upon Earth, and could not forbear expressing thus her self unto him; Now Holy Father, I am to be left alone, as a Poor Orphan Child without a Nurse, or as a Silly Sheep, amongst ravenous Wolves, without a Pastor to defend me. I was always safe with you, always joyful in your Presence, always instructed by your Exhortations, and edify'd by your Example. These Words, attended with flowing



Saint Wenefride. 57

ing Tears, so much oppress'd
Saint *Beuno's* Heart, that not
being able to utter any An-
swer, he bless'd her with his
Hand, and hasten'd his pace
in the Beginning of his Journey.

Nothing now could comfort
her, save only the fresh Re-
membrance of all his Pious In-
structions, and an earnest De-
fire of executing obediently
his Commands. Accordingly,
in a short time she associated
to her self many Noble and
Devout *Virgins*, who observ'd
such Rules as she establish'd
for them. She order'd no-
thing but what first she pra-
ctis'd her self; and Miracles
were not wanting to increase
her Authority and the Opinion
of her Sanctity. Their Love

and Respect towards her, caused each of them to contend who should be most forward in the Imitation of her rare Perfections. They nauseated forbidden Pleasures, they undervalued Wealth and Honours, and they seem'd to be Inhabitants of a Terrestrial *Paradise*, in loving and serving their Heavenly *Sponse*, the *Son of God*. She govern'd her Subjects with endearing Commands, so that they obey'd with equal Merit and Content. She eas'd them in their Difficulties and Temptations, insomuch that they observing her Rigid Mortification, her Angelical Purity, and knowing the Strict Union she had with *God* in Prayer, whatever she

Saint Wenefride. 59

she declar'd unto them, was receiv'd as Oracles from Heaven.

The spreading Fame of St. *Wenefride* was wonderfully dilated by miraculous Cures of Diseas'd Persons. They were frequent and apparent, and divulg'd thro' other Parts of *Wales*. Many flock'd from distant Places to hear her discourse and to receive Instructions, whom she sent away with flaming Hearts, and ardent Desires to be faithful and fervent in the Service of their God. They regretted a Return to their respective Habitations: And as the Queen of *Saba* stood astonish'd at *Solomon's* singular Wisdom, so these admiring Strangers magnify'd the constant

Gratitude for receiv'
vours is not only a Mora
tue, but the Eternal E
of *Cherubins* and *Ser*
who are now adoring
offering never ending T
to the Infinite Goodness o
Omnipotent *Creator*, Who
manded them out of the
of nothing. Saint *Wes*
had a most grateful Soul
honour'd Saint *Beuno* ;
Eminent Servant of *God*

Saint Wenefride. 61

would never sufficiently acknowledge her Duty to her greatest *Benefactor*, after Him who made her. Saint *Beuno* deliver'd to her the First Rudiments of Perfection; he incited her to embrace a *Religious* State; he obtain'd for her by his Prayers a Second Life, and polish'd her Interior, that she was amiable in the Sight of God and Men. To make some small return, she sent him every Year a Token, after the manner he had prescrib'd. In the Beginning of *May*, almost Year after his Departure, with the help of her Religious Sisters, she finish'd a curious Embroider'd *Vestment*; and wrapping the same in a Woolen Cloth, she went down with.

with her *Religious* and others, to the Well Side, and casting the Bundle into the Water she said; *Holy Father, according to your Command and my Promise, I send unto you this small Token of my Love.* To the great Astonishment of numerous Beholders, it passed down the Stream into the River, then into the Sea, and it landed near the Monastery where Saint Beuno then dwelt, many Miles distant from the *Holy Fountain.*

The *Holy Man* was then walking on the Sea Shore, and wonder'd what that Bundle should be; but opening it, he remembred the charge he had given to Saint *Wenefride*, and that as he had foretold, it came miraculously to him, without

Saint Wenefride. 63

the least Sign of Wet or Moisture. This *Vestment* he reserv'd with great Care in the Church, for the Celebration of Holy *Mass*. He likewise receiv'd fresher Lights of her present and future Sanctity; how much *Almighty God* would be honoured by her, not only at *Finch*, but in other Places whither Divine Providence should direct her to go. The *Virgin* never intermitted to send him a Yearly Present, till his most happy Death was reveal'd unto her, and the Glorious Reward he was crown'd with in Heaven.

This last Passage may appear to Incredulous Drolls the most surprising of all others in the History of Saint *Wenefride's* Life.

Life. Therefore Divine Providence thought fit to authenticate the Memory of it to every Day, and after this manner. In *Carnarvonshire*, Five Miles distant from the Town of *Carnarvon*, there is a Creek where the Sea-run call'd in *Welsh*, *Portby* (corruptedly, as I could find in other Appellations) for *Port by Cassul*, or the *Port of Vestment*. Here the First Proof of our Saint miraculously ded; and the Place retain Name to this Day. Near this Inlet there stands a *Large Parish Church* call'd *Cly*, in which *St. Beuno* was buried his last founded Monastery being there. His Tomb is extant, and is had in great veneration.

Saint Wenefride. 65

eneration by the Inhabitants. The History of St. *Wenefride's* Life was curiously represented in the Glass Windows of *Clyn-nog* Church ; but has been so defaced, that little now appears. What can be more persuasive to obtain Credit to this Miracle, than so Ancient and so Certain a Tradition, even to those who use their utmost efforts to destroy the Memory of Miracles. The *Port of the Vestment* solves the Objection from the Year 660 to this of 1712. As Apostolical *Tradition* is the Unwritten Word of God, and by it we receive the H. Scriptures, and the Sacred Interpretation and True Sense of them, as what regards Infant *Baptism*, &c. let it

it be lawful for me to say, that as to *Humane Faith*, uninterrupted *Tradition* from Father to Son for so many Centuries, is a clearer Attestation of *Faith*, than if it had been recorded in Written History.

After Saint *Beuno's* Decease, Saint *Wenefride* began to feel in her Soul clear Illustrations and strong Impulses for removing from the Monastery where she was. She had the comfort to see her *Religious* so well grounded in Perfection, that her Presence was not necessary. Wherefore in the End of the Seventh Year of her Government (as the Saint had foretold her) she took leave of her Spiritual Children and her Loving Parents. 'Tis e

Saint Wenefride. 67

imagin'd that as the *Virgin Martyr* was under a severe trial at the Departure of *int Beuno*, whom she call'd *r Father*; in like manner these noble Religious Virgins had heavy hearts and flowing eyes, when they understood that their dearest *Mother* was fully resolv'd to leave them. To compose and quiet them she declar'd that *it was the Will of God*, and as they had submitted unto her, they ought to show undisturb'd obedience to their *Heavenly Spouse*: That all things ought to be welcome, coming from His Fatherly hand, and appointed them by infinite Wisdom. So, having compleated necessary Orders, she embraced each of the *Sisters*,

sters, and chose One of them for a Companion in her Journey. Before her Departure she went down to visit the Place of her *Martyrdom*; where falling upon her knees in fervent Prayer, she humbly besought the *Creator* of Heaven and Earth to direct her in this New *Pilgrimage*, and likewise to *encrease* His *Blessings on such*, who in a devout manner should visit that *Well*, where for His Honour she had suffer'd the Loss of her Life. The many Miracles in subsequent Ages, gave clear testimony that her Charitable Petition had the gracious assent of *Him* Who is the Bestower of all *Good Gifts*.

Saint *Wenefride* having recommended to God her *Monastery*

***Saint Wenefride.* 69**

stery of *Finhon*, her Parents, and her Friends, Divine Providence directed her to the Cell of Blessed *Deifer*, Eight Miles distant from the *Holy Well*. This *Recluse* was much in *God's* favour; and *Robert*, Prior of *Shrewsbury*, recounts of him several evident Miracles, which for brevity are here omitted, because my sole Intention is to set forth the Merits of our Glorious *Patronefs* of *Wales*. The Holy Man told her that *God* had not made any thing known unto him as to her Journey: *But have patience* (said he) *this Night, and I will inquire after His Blessed Pleasure.* Saint *Deifer* spending the Night in Prayer, according to his custom, heard a
Voice

Voice towards Morning, which said ; *Tell my dear Virgin Daughter Wenefride, that she repair forthwith to the Village Henthlant, where the Venerable Saturnus will fully instruct her as to the Place of her Abode during Life.* Deifer acquainted her with his Commission, and likewise assur'd her, that this *Holy Neighbour* (so he call'd him) would be enabled from Heaven not only to satisfy her where to fix, but likewise he would inform her of other things relating to her self. After that, he directed her in the Way to *St. Saturnus*.

It pleas'd Almighty God to honour the Virgin's Progress by revealing the same to several Saints, and the Occasion of

Saint Wenefride. 71

er Journey. Amongst the rest
as Saint *Saturnus*, who gave
er a charitable reception at
enthlant. Great part of that
ight they spent together in
ayer and Holy Conferences ;
id to her great Consolation
entertain'd her with many
piritual Lectures. He ac-
ainted her in the Morning
at there was a Place not far
F, call'd *Witheriac* (now vul-
rly *Guitherin*) which was
rich'd with precious Re-
ques of many Glorious Saints,
ho had liv'd and dy'd there;
id on this account it was high-
reverenced by Devout Peo-
e. *This Place* (said he) *is ap-*
ointed you by Divine Providence
for your Temporal sojourning upon
earth: You'll find there a Holy
Abbot,

Abbot, by Name Elerius, who is of so great Mortification, and of so great Union with God in Prayer, that he's entirely dead to the World. I am order'd to send you to this Man, and farther to let you know, that you'll experience under his Conduct a Cœlestial Tranquility of Mind. You'll likewise find there a Monastery of chaste Virgins, who have been train'd up from their very Infancy in solid Vertue. You are destin'd by Heaven to improve them more in Perfection by your Example and Instructions. In process of time these Religious will submit themselves unto you, as to a Mother and Abbess, who is sent providentially unto them by their Heavenly Spouse.

aint Wenefride. 73

nt *Wenefride* was transfused with Joy, hearing this noble Relation of her Affairs so near at hand. Most humbly begged his Advice, and Directions how to finish her Journey. The

Man, out of Respect and Reverence, accompany'd himself part of the Way. Parting he gave her his Blessing, and order'd his Deacon to conduct her to Saint *Asa*. 'Twas no small Comfort to her that she was travelling towards a *Monastery of Virgins*, and there to enjoy their Angelical Conversation.

Witherby is now a Village, never it was in former Days, in *Denbighshire*, near
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the River *Cluide*, which separates this County from that of *Flint*. Saint *Elerius* had here his Monastery in a Vale call'd *Vallis Clutina*, where several Religious Persons of Both Sexes embraced his Institute, and follow'd his Example.

The Holy Abbot had a Revelation of her Coming, and of her distinguishing Merits; therefore to honour her, he met her at some distance, and led her to the Church. After they had prayed a while together, he took her aside from the *Deacon* and her Companion, telling her, that he was no Stranger to that Heroical Act, of suffering a violent death to preserve her Virgi-

Saint Wenefride. 75

ity; that the Miraculous
ountain was an evident Te-
imony of it; and that he
ould cheerfully assist her in
he Designs of His *Divine Ma-*
sty, intended by this her
ourney. The *Virgin* reply'd,
hat as to her self, she had only
his to offer; That as she had been
vided by God's Holy Spirit to
nd him out, so in the future
ourse of her Life, she would be
a obedient Child, in hearing
nd observing his Directions.

The Holy Abbot was ex-
remely edify'd at this humble
nd modest Answer. He told
er, That if she pleas'd, they
ould spend that Night in
rayer, for greater security in
his important Affair. This
ey did; and he having re-

ceiv'd clearer Lights from Heaven, was replenish'd with incredible Joy, and told her the Morning, that *Almighty God* would not be wanting to increase His Fatherly Love towards her. Without saying more, he led her out of the Church to the Monastery which was under his Government, and he spoke thus to the Religious *Virgins*.

Rejoice, Dear Children of God, for that it hath pleas'd your Heavenly Spouse to send a New Star of wonderful Brightness to shine amongst you. He has provided you such a Companion, who will enrich your Souls with the Treasure of Religious Perfection by the Pattern she'll set before you. This is the Renowned Virgin *Wendefrid*

Saint Wenefride. 77

nefride, who as you have heard, suffer'd a Glorious Death, in defence of her Chastity. This is she whose Triumphs are recounted in Churches, and whose Trophies illustrate the Province where she lived. Rejoice therefore, because she is come to remain and end her Days amongst you. Happy is her Arrival! Preserve carefully this inestimable Treasure. Mark and imitate the Example she'll shew you, and give attention to the Spiritual Documents she'll deliver; because for this Christ has sent her. Having utter'd this Speech to the Religious in general, he address'd the Venerable Abbess Theonia with these few Words: To you, Dear Mother, after a more special manner, I recommend a respectful Entertainment

of this Sacred Spouse of Christ, Who by directing her hither, has signally regarded and regaled your Family. After this he withdrew, leaving Saint Wenefride amongst them, blushing, and as it were sinking under the Burthen of her own Praises.

Not only Abbess *Theonia*, who was a very Holy Woman, but Saint *Elerius* also, held frequently private conferences with Saint *Wenefride*; and discoursing of Heavenly Mysteries and Vertuous Practices, they discover'd her to be so clearly illuminated in the First, and so solidly grounded in the Second, that Both of them admir'd the rich Treasury of her Soul. When the *Abbot* return'd to his *Monks*, who liv'd
not

Saint Wenefride. . 79

not far off in Austere Discipline,
'twas his Custom to magnify
the Merits of this *Stranger*,
and seem'd not able to express
what was due unto her.

At length the Fame of her
Sanctity was so much divul-
ged, that numerous Crowds
of all Callings flock'd to *Gut-
therin*, to behold a Noble Cou-
rageous Creature, who to se-
cure her Virginity had suffer'd
the Loss of her Head, and
who after Death, to the greater
Glory of her *Spouse*, by a Holy
Man's Prayer had return'd to,
Life. They importun'd her to
shew the *Pure White Circle*
round her Neck, which she in-
dustriously declin'd, till at the
request of her *Sisters* she yield-
ed to their Pious Desire, lest

E. 4.

she

she should seem to affect *Military*. The Glorious Scar
 ced Tears of Compunct
 from their Eyes, by refl
 ing how Heroically and w
 what Fortitude she recei
 the Mortal Wound from

Sword of cruel *Cradocus*,
 ther than once to offend
God, and how often they
 thew'd their Weakness,
 complying with the First S
 gestions of the Internal E
 my, and shameful Proposal
 a wicked Companion.

Saint *Elerius* going one I
 to the Monastery to visit
 Living *Martyr*, and to coi
 with her in Spiritual Matt
 they enter'd occasionally on
 Subject of *the Happiness of d*
well. He told her, That he

Saint Wenefride. 81

ten took complacency in the Thoughts of having her near him when he lay on his Death Bed, *and that after his Departure* her Prayers would afford him Relief for the Repose of his Soul. *No Father* (said she Prophetically) *Christ hath appointed otherwise. You shall live to bury our Dear Mother Theonia, and a few Tears after to bury me: Then some time being expir'd, your self shall pass from this transitory World, and go to Him, of Whose Kingdom there is no End.* All this came to pass as the *Saint* foretold.

Soon after this Prediction *Theonia* was visited with her final Sickness; and finding herself near her End, she receiv'd from *Elerius's* hands the Blessed

E. 5. *Sacrament,*

Sacrament, as her Viaticum to conduct her safely towards Heaven. The Religious were on their Knees round her Bed, lamenting bitterly the foreseen Loss, whom she comforted after this manner: Children! Tears are not to flow for Friends or for our selves, unless some Evil hath happen'd or Misfortune. Our present Case has no such countenance: As to my self, I am hastening to my Heavenly Spouse, (as I hope) Who calls me to Him. As to you; B. Wenefride, a more Holy Mother, will succeed me, who by Words and Works will improve you in Perfection. Follow her steps, and you will not wander nor go astray. Then being spent, she breath'd out her pure and precious Soul. Her Obsequies being

Saint Wenefride. 83

ing solemnly and christianly perform'd by St. *Elerius*, he appointed *Saint Wenefride* Abbeſs, to govern the *Monastery*. Her profound Humility diſſuaded her from undertaking the Charge, but the Obedience ſhe had promis'd the Holy *Abbot*, and the repeated Petitions of the *Sisters*, notwithstanding Natural Reluctancy, wrought her at laſt into compliance.

The nice Art of governing *many*, whoſe Geniuſes and Conſtitutions are as differing as the Features of their Faces, is attended with ſuch vaſt Difficulties, that *Solomon* being favour'd and honour'd by the *Almighty* with that unlimited Offer, *Ask what thou wilt, that*

I

84 *The Life of*

I may give it thee *. The considering *King* petition'd for what was most necessary, to rule the numerous *Israelites*; he desir'd not Riches or Glory, but *Wisdom*, a *docible Heart*. Saint *Wenefride* was naturally Prudent, and her *Spouse* bestow'd upon her a more than ordinary Talent of Governing; so that wish'd for Success answer'd Expectation. He bless'd *that Head* with supernatural Wisdom, which had been sacrificed to his Honour. She made use of the same Maxims and Methods at *Guitherin*, as before she had done at *Finhon*. Her Commands were intimated with such Affability and Discretion, that they appeared
to

* 3 Reg. iii. 5.

Saint Wenefride. 85

to her Subjects so many Intreaties. She went constantly before the rest in the most painful Duties of the *Monastery*; and altho' the Dignity of her Office requir'd due Distance, she not only convers'd with her *Sisters* as with Equals, but also look'd upon herself as the least deserving in the whole *Community*. She had the true Spirit of Poverty, and was so much averse to Superfluities that she would scarce admit of Necessaries. She was most rigid in Abstinence, and *Patience* had taken such absolute possession of her Heart, that not the least Entrance was allow'd to Anger and other inordinate Passions. Her Prayer was continual, when not interrupted.

ted by Duties of Charity, and necessary Sleep. She was frequently favour'd with *Raptures* and *Extasies*. She never dropp'd any Word tending to her own Commendation, and was sensibly afflicted when others mention'd any thing in her Praise.

The Blessed *Martyr* inculcated daily to her *Sisters* to have always before their eyes the Grand Example of their Dear *Redeemer*, and to copy out such Vertues as He exercis'd, to instruct as well as to save them : That they ought to study a pure Intention in all their Actions, to serve *God* for His own sake. She earnestly recommended Fortitude and Perseverance, as strong Armor
to

Saint Wenefride. 87

to overcome all sorts of Temptations. That they ought not to be dismay'd in these Spiritual Conflicts, for by the Conquest they would obtain the Crown. *Prayer* (she said) when well perform'd, did dilate their Souls, and prepar'd an Entrance to Divine Grace, which enabled them to undertake Noble Actions for their God. 'Tis needless to mention her Angelical Purity; the flowing *Fountain* seems to denote that she would have parted with Streams of Blood, rather than to have consented to One single Thought to the prejudice of her consecrated Virginity.

'Twas observ'd that when she exhorted her *Religious*, a
Depth

Depth of Heavenly Wi
 appear'd in her Words, w
 inflam'd her Hearers with
 Love of *Jesus*. She wa
 vour'd with a special Gi
 discovering Temptations,
 of applying proper Remo
 to defeat the Enemy. No
 ly the *Laity*, but even *Reli*
Men and *Prelates*, found g
 advantage by conferring
 her. Many resorted to *Gu*
rin from all Parts of the
 vince: What is yet more,
 torious *Thieves* and invete
 Malefactors were reclai
 from their Evil Courses by
 powerful Advice and irref
 ble Remonstrances.

Almighty GOD was ple
 to declare by Signs and M
 cles, how much Saint W

Saint Wenefride. 89

fride was in His divine favour. Scarce any Day passed, wherein by sudden Cures of desperate Distempers, she did not comfort drooping and desponding *Patients*. Her *Monastery* resembled a Common Refuge of the Distress'd, and she was like a Tender *Mother* to the Unfortunate. Her Heroical Vertues were the Universal Subject of Discourse in Private Families, and the Fame of her Miracles was heard from the Pulpits in Churches. St. *Elerius*, who was best acquainted with her Merits, declar'd openly, That *Providence* had directed her to *Guitherin*, to honour and benefit them all: but from Humane Applause, which was abhorr'd by her to the

the last degree, she was invited by a Revelation, to the Immortal Glory of *Angels*.

The *Saint* being thus forewarn'd of her long wish'd for Departure, the welcome News, for whole Days and Nights, threw her into *Extasies* of Joy. She had made it her study to forget, as much as possible, what she had done or suffer'd for her Dear Lord; and therefore, as one who is to undertake a long Journey, she made necessary provisions, as if nothing had been perform'd during the Course of her Holy Life. She redoubled her Fasts and other Austerities; she fatigued herself in the painful Exercises of continual Charity towards her *Sisters* and others.

Notwithstanding

Saint Wenefride. 91

otwithstanding her Angelical
terior, and the uninterrop-
d Union with her Divine
ouse, she vilify'd herself, as
e not worthy of His Pre-
nce. That she might not
rprise the Community, by
er leaving them in a short
ckness, she imparted first to
int *Elerius* the Summons
e had receiv'd from her Re-
emer, and the same after-
ards to her dear *Sisters*,
hose Sorrow was little infe-
or to those Transports of Ju-
lee she was absorp'd in, by
e certain Assurance of pas-
ng speedily to her *Lord* and
Master. They wept, they
ourned, but she thus com-
rted them.

Weep

Weep not, Dear Children, but conform your Wills to your Creator's Pleasure. Doubt not but that in Heaven (whither thro' the Mercies of God I am going) I shall be more serviceable to you by my Prayers, than here on Earth by my Presence. For that Land of Promise is not a Place of Ignorance but of clear Knowledge, where the Blessed understand the Wants of their Friends on Earth; and they being united to the Fountain Head of Infinite Charity, they are powerful and ready to procure speedy Helps to succour them. This I promise to do for you, My dear Children, after that Christ shall have taken me into His Kingdom. You must not be contristated like those who have no hope. To wicked Worldlings, who by
their

Saint Wenefride. 93

*their sinful Lives dread the Sight
of a Terrible Judge, Death ap-
pears like a cruel Executioner, to
drag them to a formidable Tribu-
nal; but to Innocent and Holy
Souls Death is entertain'd as a
welcome Guest; he finds them rea-
dy to embrace him with Joy: They
are like to Men expecting their
Lord, when he returns from the
Marriage*, and are ready to go
with him, as through God's Mer-
cy, I hope that I am prepar'd at
present for the Heavenly Journey,
to enter into the Joys of my Lord.*

Her concluding Sickneſs
took its beginning from fre-
quent and violent Convulſions,
which ſhe endur'd with unpa-
ralell'd Patience. The lively
Hopes of ſeeing her Heavenly
Spouſe,

* St. Luke, xii. 36.

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Saint Wenefride. 95

gious in tears upon their Knees, she said; *Dear Children, rather congratulate with me, than grieve so much at my approaching Happiness. I hope 'ere long to enjoy Him in Heaven, Whom I have ardently loved upon Earth. Preserve inviolably the Promise you have made Him: Undervalue the base and sordid Pleasures of this transitory World: Reflect that your Bodies, altho' beautiful and and in their prime, are no other than loathsome Prisons, which detain your Immortal Souls in close Confinement. Take great heed not to defile them, and never forget this important Lesson, That the Heavenly Comfort and Joy, which pure Souls experience on their Death Bed, recompences abundantly all Worldly Riches, Pleasures,*

tures, and Honors, which they have despis'd and abandon'd for the Service and Love of Jesus Christ.

The Saint, as it were, knowing the very Minute of her Departure, took her Last Leave and Blessing of Holy *Elerius*, hoping that they wou'd meet soon in Heaven, without any Fear of a Future Separation. She humbly requested that her Body might be bury'd near unto *Theonia's*, her Holy Mother. Then in a pure Act of intense Love of God, on the Third of *November*, she breath'd out her thrice happy Soul into her Blessed Redeemer's hand.

Elerius observing that she had expir'd, as the *Religious* also did, who were kneeling

Saint Wenefride. 97

near her Bed; the many deep Sighs publish'd their Loss. The Holy Abbot found himself oblig'd to suppress his own Grief, that he might more effectually comfort them, by declaring that she was only removed to Heaven before them, and that they ought to prepare to follow after her: That she was united gloriously to her God, and by her Prayers would powerfully assist them. Her Body was very little alter'd in the Comeliness of it, by her Death; and as she had desir'd, 'twas solemnly interr'd near *Theonia's*, and many other *Saints* bury'd before her in that Place: Amongst the rest were *Cheb* and *Sennan*, the one lying at her Head, and the
F other

other by her Side. Both these were renown'd for Sanctity and Miracles, and had Churches rais'd to their Memories. Yet altho' these Two, and many other *Saints* Bodies, which had been committed to that Holy Ground, drew thither Devout People; yet the Place was mostly revered and honor'd for Saint *Wenefride's* Sepulcher, which was afterwards favour'd by a Train of evident Miracles. Not long after, Saint *Elerius*, by a happy Death, finish'd his Course, and went to receive the Eternal Reward of his Apostolical Labours. His Body was interr'd in a Church erected to his Name and Memory, where it pleas'd Almighty God to
work

Saint Wenefride. 99

ork Miraculous Cures, in testimony of his Sanctity on earth, and Power by his Praying in Heaven.

The *Omnipotent*, Who has cur'd Mortals by His Divine promise, That *those who glorify in Him, He will glorify them* *, most eminently fulfill'd the promise in Saint *Wenefride*, both living and Dead. She glorify'd her Creator in her tender years, by consecrating unto Him her unspotted Virginity. She glorify'd Him, like Saint *Catharine* and Saint *Agnes*, with a cheerful Offering of her self, to preserve untainted purity to her Heavenly *house*. She glorify'd Him, by withdrawing noble *Virgins*

F 2

from

* 1 Reg. ii. 30.

from the prevaricating World, and raising their Souls to the pure Love of *God*; instructing them in the true Spirit of Humility and Mortification. In fine she glorify'd Him thro' the whole course of her Life, in all points of Religious Perfection, not only relating to her Subjects, but even the *Laity*. On the other hand the *Almighty* has glorify'd her, down to the Present Age, from the Year Six Hundred and Sixty. According to Saint *Beuno's* Prediction, there has been no Cessation of Miracles; testifying her signal Sanctity, and how dear her precious Soul is to her *Maker*. 'Tis true, this humble Virgin was accusom'd to blush and to shed tears, at the
First

Saint Wenefride. 101

First Sound of her Praises, and therefore desir'd and obtain'd that she might absent her self from *Finhon*, to live in obscurity (as she resolv'd) out of the frothy Noise of Acclamations, which she could not avoid at the Place of her Martyrdom. This was her Pious Contrivance, but the Design of Heaven was to glorify her at *Guizherin*. As God commanded a Torrent to flow in that *Dry Valley*, where her Bloody Head touch'd first the Ground, so at her Sepulcher He did not reject or refuse any Petition, made by her devoted Suppliants.

The Historians of her Life, Saint *Elerius* and *Salopienfis*, concluded that it would be an

F 3 Undertaking

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and other Di
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king the *Water*
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This became so
tender *Mothers* i
culty of casting
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which was a fi
Such as liv'd at g
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caused the Water to
to them, and draw

Saint Wenefride. 103

in very Remote Places, us'd to put One of the Little *Bloody Stones* which was taken out of the *Well*, into other Spring Water, and they were cured. 'Tis said that the *Virgin Martyr* herself prescrib'd the First Use of this Last Remedy, who soon after her Second Death appearing to many, who in dangerous Distempers devoutly call'd upon her, she directed them, for their speedy recovery, to apply the Water and Stones of the *Well* in the aforesaid manner. Such as had Swellings, or Old Sores, bathed the Part affected, and they found present relief.

At this wonderful *Spring* almost daily Miracles were wrought, according to a Peti-

tion she made to *God* before she left *Finbon*; That He would vouchsafe to bless Corporally, and sanctify Spiritually, all those who in Future Ages, should devoutly visit her *Fountain*, and there acknowledge the many Benefits with which He had favour'd her. Frequent Miracles were likewise wrought at her *Tomb*. Multitudes of Diseas'd Persons became perfectly cured, by praying, and kissing the Earth, where the Sacred *Remainder* of her was deposited.

The Holy Author of Saint *Wenefride's* Life and Death, was not satisfy'd with a General Relation of Miraculous Cures: He descends to Particulars, that Unbelieving Posterity

Saint Wenefride. 105

sterity might be induced to allow credit to what he had recorded as to *daily Wonders*. I touch two or three with Brevity. *From the Beginning of the World it hath not been heard, that any Man opened the Eyes of one born blind, unless this Man were of God* *. This declar'd the Omnipotence of the Long Expected *Messias*; and the like Favour soon after *our Saint's* Death, gave wing to the Fame of her Sanctity, and Power in Heaven, and spread the same thro' the *Western* Provinces of *Britain*. A poor Carpenter, dwelling not far from *St. Wenefride's* Well, had a Daughter born blind. She growing up, and groaning under that Temporal

F 5 Misfortune,

* *St. John ix. 32.*

Misfortune, hearing the Report of many Miraculous Cures wrought at that *Fountain*, she importun'd her Father daily, to be handed thither. This was granted; and being come to the Place, she bathed her Head in the Water and was afterwards conducted to the *Chappel*, near unto the *Well*. She spent that whole Night in Prayer, beseeching God, thro' the Merits and Intercession of Saint *Wenefrid* who was *Martyr'd* for his love, to bestow upon her Corporal Sight, to the end she might serve Him better, and be an *Eye Witness* of the Wonders wrought in that Place. Towards Morning she fell in a Slumber; and when she open

Saint Wenefride. 107

open'd her Eye Lids, she found herself bless'd with perfect Sight. This being so notorious and publick, begat fresh Veneration to the *Holy Well*, and was divulged far and near, to His Honor, Who is glorify'd in His *Saints*.

The *Saint's* Privilege was not confin'd to her *Well* and Chappel; the adjacent Places were a fort of Sanctuary, under her Protection: Witness what happen'd to some Thieves, who stole a Cow, out of a Pasture near unto St. *Wenefride's* Chappel. The Robbers forc'd her over Rocky Ways, that they might not be traced; but it happen'd otherwise: For the Cow fix'd not one Step, without leaving a deep Impression.

Impression in the Stones, as if she had been passing thro' soft Clay. The Footsteps also of the Thieves so visibly appear'd, that the Owner next Morning missing his Beast, he and his Neighbours follow'd after by the Miraculous Track. The Robbers perceiving them near at hand, made the best of their way to escape, and left the Booty to whom it belonged. They afterwards observ'd at leisure, how the Cow had left the clear Prints of her Feet as she was carry'd off, but not the least Impression after she was retriev'd and return'd homewards. Great Crowds of People flock'd to behold the said Prints in the Stones, and publish'd the Miracle.

Saint Wenefride. 109

racle. The Thieves themselves, apprehending lest some severe Judgment should befall them, to terrify others, came penitently to the *Martyr's* Altar: They confess'd their Sin, and warn'd all not to commit the like Trespas.

- Behold a following Example yet more terrifying. A Messenger being dispatch'd by a Chief *Lord* of that Country, to give his Neighbors timely notice of some approaching Danger from the Bordering *Saxons* (who continually carry'd on War against them) was way-laid by Thieves, and pursued to Saint *Wenefride's* Church, whither he fled, as to a safe Sanctuary. The *Express* fasten'd

fasten'd his Horse near the Door, which they away, not presuming to sue him to the *Altar*, where stood for refuge. After the Departure the Messenger call'd forth, and finding that the Horse was carry'd off, he return'd into the Church, and prostrate, made a pious complaint before the *Saints Altar* that he indeed had sustain'd a considerable Loss, but 'twas she who was highly injur'd: That the *Authors of the Crime* deserv'd Exemplar Punishment, to the end others might be deterr'd from violating the Safety of her Sanctuary, and the Reverence due unto it. His Remonstrance was accepted of by Divine Justice; for the

Saint Wenefride. III

the *Thief* who had unty'd the Horse, and had him in actual Possession, was suddenly seized all over his Body with such Extremity of Pains that he often call'd on Death, to deliver him from the Torture. After a few Days, his Right Arm (which was the Instrument of his Sin) began to swell, then to putrify, and rot in a loathsome manner. This Tribulation gave Understanding to him, who had neglected Conscience in time of Health. Wherefore, he came to her Church, and begged with many Tears, the *Saint's* pardon for his Insolence, and the wrong he had done her. He became a true *Penitent*, and this Humiliation so much deserv'd:

deserv'd her Favour, that by degrees he was cured of his painful Ulcer. He prais'd God for His Mercy, and Saint *Wenefride* for her Compassion, preaching to others not to offend against the Sanctity of the Place, nor to give disturbance to the *Saint's* Clients, who in Distresses run unto her for Succor.

Take another Instance, in a Passage which may seem of less moment. A *Labourer* presum'd to cut off for his own use, a Bough from an Old Oak growing near unto *Guitherin* Church-door, which afforded a convenient Shade to Devout *Pilgrims*, when the Concourse was so great, that they were forced to remain without, and

Saint Wenefride. 113

o pray under it. No sooner had he struck his Hatchet into the Bough, than 'twas immovably fix'd there; and as *Jeboam's* Hand wither'd, which he had stretch'd forth, to order the Apprehension of the Man of God, *that he was not able to draw it back* *; so this poor Man's Hand and Arm cleav'd so fast to the Handle of the Ax, that with all his Strength he was not able to separate them. He attempted often in vain to let go his hold, and finding himself in that surprising Distress, he cry'd out for Help and Assistance. Some Persons near by heard his mournful Voice, and ran to the Place, admiring at the Wonder. They

3 Reg. xiii. 4,

pity on him! At
his Hand and Arm
liberty, and were
their former Free
Cut in the Branch
to Robert, Prior of
when he came to
Sacred Reliques, o
am going to give a
with the occasion of
val.

In the Reign of
liam the Conqueror,
Earl of his Court, cal
built a *firm*.

Saint Wenefride. 115

City, endowing the same with sufficient Revenues. An *Abbot* and his Monks being therein settled, they began to lament the Want of Holy *Reliques* in their New Church, which *Wales* was stor'd with most abundantly, by reason that many Eminent *Saints* of Both Sexes, had formerly flourish'd in those Parts, renown'd for Sanctity and the Grace of Miracles. Hereupon they began to consider and consult, what *Saint's* Body might be obtain'd by them, to bring a Blessing upon the *Religious* Family. During this Deliberation, a *Monk* of their Monastery fell dangerously sick, and moreover was so distracted in mind, that his Brethren both
in

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in *Shrewsbury* and *Chester*, ceased not to recommend to *Almighty God* his Recovery. One Day, when the Vertuous Sub-Prior of *Chester-Abbey*, had ended his Prayer for the miserable Creature, he dropp'd into an unusual Sleep; to whom a Woman appear'd in Glorious Attire, and said; *If you desire the Sick Man's Health, let one of you go, and offer for him a Mass, in the Chappel near unto Saint Wenefride's Well, and he will presently recover: After which she vanish'd out of his Sight.*

The Sub-Prior *Radulphus* (that was his Name) awak'd in great Amazement, but was backward in saying one Word of the Vision, fearing that it would not find any credit.

But

Saint Wenefride. 117

But when he heard that his *Brother's* Distemper grew more desperate, Charity oblig'd him to declare what he had seen. All the *Religious* were of opinion, that Saint *Wenefride* herself had given these directions. Wherefore they immediately dispatch'd away, Two of their Company; who celebrated Holy *Mass* in her Chappel, and at that very time, as it was calculated, the *Shrewsbury* Monk was restor'd to perfect Health. On this account both he and the other *Monks* became more tenderly devoted to the *Virgin-Martyr*.

Robertus Salopiensis spends Seven Chapters, in relating what methods were taken, that happy Success might answer

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answer their zealous Intention. I Epitomise, yet will not omit any thing, which appears to me very material. The *Abbot* and Monks of *Shrewsbury* persisted with great Constancy many Years, in their earnest Desires and fervorous Prayers, to obtain the Treasure of Saint *Wenefride's* Sacred Reliques, In the Reign of King *Henry* the First, a Grant was given of them, but by reason of many Commotions, after the King's Death in that Country, the Business was not effected till the Second Year of K. *Stephen's* Reign; when *Abbot Herbert* in a Consult with his Monks, deputed *Robert* his Prior, and *Richard*, an eminent Monk of the same Monastery, to pass
into

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into *Wales*, to bring back with them the *Reliques*. To facilitate the Matter, before their Departure several Letters were transmitted to Friends in those Parts. They visited in their Journey the Bishop of *Bangor*, and were directed by him to a Principal Lord, who ruled in that Country where the Blessed Body was kept. The Nobleman understanding the cause of their coming, entertain'd them courteously, and said; That doubtless GOD and the Holy MARTYR has sent you to translate her Body, to a Place where 'twill be more honour'd. I not only give my consent, but I will send also my Servants to assist you. Were not I unavoidably detain'd by Business
of

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of Importance, I would presume to go with you in person, and with my unworthy hands, I would deliver unto you those Sacred Pledges of Sanctity.

This gracious Speech cheer'd up the sollicitous Travellers, who were Seven in Number, viz. The Two Priors of Shrewsbury and Chester; Richard the Monk; a Godly Priest born in that Country, and Three Attendants. They set forward towards the Saint's Sepulcher, and being come near unto Guitherin, they met a Man, who cast them into dejection, but not into despair of Success. He acquainted them in plain and positive Terms, that the Inhabitants having intelligence of their Coming, and

int Wenefride. 121

of their Intentions, were
ately resolv'd to oppose
: That no Favour, nor
r of any Mortal, should
il with them to permit
Chief *Saint's* Body, Pa-
ls of their Country, to
cry'd away by Strangers.
ese few Words did so
dispirit them, that it
d necessary to have En-
gement from Heaven.

Robert lay conceal'd in a
er's House, and sent the
r Prior and the other
to *Guitherin*, they being
of Birth, and well
n in that Country. *Ro-*
ising up at his usual time
r Mattins, was certify'd by
vout Man, who was one
is Company, how that
G Night

Night a glorious *Virgin* had appear'd unto him, and had order'd him to acquaint the anxious *Prior*, that he should prosperously effect the *Affair* he came about, and by her means, whose Honor he had espous'd. *Robert*, something comforted with this Relation, after finishing Mattins fell into a Slumber, and seem'd to see a former Holy *Abbot* of his own Monastery, call'd *Godfrey*, who thus reviv'd him; *Banish Fear, Brother Robert, of failing in your Design. Be of good heart; for by God's Assistance I shall defeat those who oppose; and we shall obtain what for many Years we have earnestly desir'd* This was more than sufficient to animate him in the prose

Saint Wenefride. 123

tion of his Journey, especially the other *Prior* having sent an Express to hasten them forward, because God had prosper'd their Undertaking.

Being arriv'd early in the Morning at *Guitherin* Church, and having prayed some time before her Body, the Chief *Priest* of the Parish came unto them, who kindly saluted them. They humbly begg'd his charitable Assistance, of obtaining the *Saint's* Holy Reliques, which he easily granted them, as knowing before they came, the Will of God. For (said he) on Easter Eve Last, I had a Vision in this very Place. Composing my self to rest, a Beautiful Young Man appear'd unto me, commanding me to arise.

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I answer'd, that 'twas not yet the Hour for Mattins; so he left me. Returning the second time, when I was more oppress'd with Sleep, he bid me rise, as before he had done; but being very heavy, I reply'd that I would rise in due time; and covering my Head with my Cloak, I return'd to Sleep. In the Third Visit, he pull'd away my Cloak with Violence, ordering me to follow him without Delay, as I did, very much affrighted. He led me to the Saint's Shrine, and pointing at it with his Finger, said, Note well this Place, and also my Words. I do command thee, that if some Months hence, Persons come to open this Sepulcher, and to carry away with them the Saint's Body, that thou hinder

Saint Wenefride. 125

der them not in their Holy Design, but assist them to the utmost of thy power; lest by resisting, thou be punish'd (as I foretel thee) for thy Disobedience, by some *irremediab*le *Sickness*. *After this the Angel vanish'd away.*

The Good *Pastor* was not wanting to his intimated Duty. He disposed the Owners of the Village to acquiesce in the Will of *God*, and order'd the Parishioners to repair to the Church. Prior *Robert* seeing such a numerous Assembly, spoke unto them by an Interpreter, in this manner; *I and my Companions are come hither by Divine Appointment, to obtain of you Saint Wenefride's Body, that it may be honour'd in our City*

and Monastery, Both which are much devoted unto her. The Virgin her self (as your Pastor here present knows) hath by Visions manifested her Will; and she cannot but be displeased with those, who are so bold as to contradict what she desires should be done.

Great attention was given to what he said, and they seem'd much inclin'd to grant the Pious Request; One Man only oppos'd the Motion, and with a clamorous Voice declar'd, That they should never be depriv'd, by his Consent, of so great a Treasure: that the Saint had lived holily, and departed in that Place; her Reliques were now honour'd by them, as they had been by their *Ancestors*, and that Almighty

Saint Wenefride. 127

mighty *God* had approv'd of the Peoples Devotion at her Shrine, by frequent *Miracles*. This Man was of an avaritious Temper, and mov'd to be so violent, not out of a Motive of Piety, but Lucre. However after many Consultations, at last, they all unanimously consented, that *Saint Wenefride's* Body should be delivered to the *Monks*, to be translated to *Shrewsbury*.

The *Prior*, and his Companions, return'd their most humble thanks, and without loosing time, desir'd to enter the *Holy Isle*, where the *Saint's* Shrine had been visited for many Ages, by devout Pilgrims. *Robert* with his Company being come before the

Sacred Reliques, sung joyfully to Almighty God Psalms of Thanksgiving. They wrapp'd up decently her Bones in the Finest Linnen, which was brought by them on that account ; and after a Repetition of grateful Expressions to the *Pastor* and to the Inhabitants, they proceeded that Night towards *Shropshire*. In the way homeward they cured a Sick Man, who was tortur'd with a violent Distemper, by putting into Water a little of the Earth found in Saint *Wenefride's* Head, and causing him to drink of it. This evident Miracle increased Veneration to those Sacred *Reliques*.

Prior Robert gave timely notice to his *Abbot*, that they
were

Saint Wenefride. 129

were near at hand with the desired Treasure, and he receiv'd orders to deposite the same in Saint *Giles's* Church, which stood near unto the Gate of the City, to the end that the Body might be brought to the Monastery in greater Splendor, by a solemn Procession of the *Bishop, Clergy, and People.* During its stay there, *Monks* were appointed by turns, to pray Day and Night before the *Altar*, on which the *Virgin's* Bones were exposed. Multitudes of the Citizens of *Shrewsbury* join'd with them in prayer, and mutually congratulated each other for the happiness of so potent a Patroness. Saint *Wenefride* was not backward in re-

rowing one is v
ble.

A Young Man
in a miserable Co
his Limbs were so
that he could not
and his Head so m
downwards toward
that he could not
wards, to lift an E
ven. He desir'd to
to Saint *Giles's* Chur
be set down before
on which stood the S
liques. He from

Saint Wenefride. 131

might be heal'd. Towards Morning he dropp'd into a Slumber, and before the *Priest* came to celebrate the First Mass, he awak'd, and found himself perfectly cured. This astonish'd the whole City, seeing him to walk as readily as any of the Inhabitants.

A Day being appointed by the *Bishop*, to convey the Sacred Reliques from St. Giles's Church to the Monastery; notice was given both to Town and Country, and withal, that such who assisted, or were present at the Procession, would not only receive the *Bishop's* Blessing, but also would gain *Indulgences*, granted on the account of the Solemnity. The Universal Fame of Miracles,
and

the Proceſſional
Sky frown'd with
Clouds, and thre
mediate Rain:
ready to fall, contr
much all devote
Saint, as foreſeeing
would withdraw
The *Clergy* and *Monks*
earnestly the *Omnipo*
ſer of all Times and
that He would pleaſe
Dry Weather, for
Honour, and of Hi
and for the

Saint Wenefride. 133

until the Proceſſion was ended. Their Prayers were heard ſo effectually, that altho' violent Showers power'd down in other Parts of the City, and adjacent Fields, not One ſingle Drop fell into any Street through which the Bleſſed *Body* was to paſs. The thick Clouds hover'd, and hung over their Heads, as gather'd on purpoſe to bring *Saint Wenefride* miraculoſly, to her New Poſſeſſion of the Holy *Benedictin* Monastery.

The Streets were lin'd with an incredible Concourse of Devout People, who on their Knees ſhed Tears of Joy as the *Body* paſſed by, for ſo great a Bleſſing. Theſe were the tender Showers, which fell
in

in those Streets, excepted by Heaven from Rain. The *Bishop* and *Priests*, brought the *Reliques* to the Monastery, which were reverently receiv'd from them by the *Abbot* and his *Monks*, as inestimable Jewels. They were magnificently placed upon the High *Altar*, which was dedicated to the Holy Apostles Saint *Peter* and Saint *Paul*, where many Miracles were wrought for the help and benefit of Souls and Bodies. *The Name of God be prais'd for ever and ever.*

Hitherto I have follow'd *Robertus Salopiensis*, who translated Saint *Wenefride's* Body from *Guitherin* to *Shrewsbury*, in the Year of our Redemption,
Eleven.

Saint Wenefride. 135

Eleven Hundred, Thirty, and Eight.

Not only this City, but likewise other Parts of *Great Britain* became most tenderly devoted to the Holy Virgin-Martyr, which induced *Henry* Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, in a Provincial Synod in 1420, to appoint the Feast of Saint *Wenefride* to be solemnly kept all over *England* with an Office of Nine Lessons on the Third Day of *November* *.

'Tis astonishing, and likewise deplorable, to hear some Persons decrying Miracles, and ridiculing them with so great boldness, and Contempt, that in despite of Holy *Doctors* of the

* *Lindewode, Fol. 76. Alford. Anno 1438.*

The Life of
the Church, and Religious
Writers, they represent *Jesus*
Christ as One Unfaithful to His
Solemn Promise to Future A-
ges, and they obstinately
maintain, that all Miracles had
a full period after the Apostles
Preaching. They assent with-
out Hesitation to Pagan *Plu-*
tarch, *Tacitus*, or *Suetonius*, but
demurr, and doubt of the Au-
thority of that Eminent *Saint*
and Learned *Doctor*, *Saint*
John Chrysostome, who wrote a
whole Book on the Subject of
Miracles * ; whence he infers,
against the wilful *Heathens*,
that *Christ* is *God*, Who works
such Wonders by the dry Ashes
of His Followers. The Mira-
cles register'd by *St. Augustin*,
in

* *Lib. de Babyla, M.*

Saint Wenefride. 137

his Book *of the City of God*; those of *Venerable Bede* in his Ecclesiastical History; what *St. Jerome* says of *Saint Paul* the First Hermit, and *Saint Hilarion*; and *Saint Gregory* the Great in his Dialogues, are Matter of Mirth to these profane Drolls. They don't attend what Master they seek to please, by imitating the obdurate *Jews*, who, to discredit the Miracles of the *Son of God*, gave them a malicious turn, saying, *In Beelzebub Prince of Devils, He casts out Devils**.

Our invincible *Heroine*, the Glorious *Virgin-Martyr*, *Saint Wenefride*, has not met with kinder quarter: For after the Plunder of her rich *Shrine*,
and

* *St. Luke*, xi. 15.

and the Scattering of her Blessed Bones, her admirable Life must be list'd with the *Monkish Legends*; her evident Miracles are Fabulous Narratives; and the stupendious Cures wrought at her *Well*, are nothing else but the experienc'd Effects of a *Cold Bath*. To the greater Honor of *God*, Who has honor'd this *Saint* to a wonderful degree, I will instance a few Late Miracles, and refer it to the *truly Christian* Reader, whether the Watry Element could influence such uncommon Changes. I will not travail further back than the Last Age, lest it be objected, that many things are asserted, happening long ago, which may rationally be believ'd, but
cannot.

Saint Wenefride. 139

cannot be disproved. The Original Attestations at this moment lie before me; and where I do not abbreviate (some Cures being worded after a prolix manner, as to Circumstances) I will deliver what I offer, in the very Expressions of the Authentick Records. They are taken from Eye-Witnesses, who were Persons of tender Conscience and nice Honor, sometimes given in under their own Hand-Writing.

In the Year of our *Lord God* One Thousand, Six Hundred, and Six, *Sir Roger Bodenham*, Knight of the Honorable Order of the *Bath*, after a tedious Quartan Ague, had a gross Humor settled in his Legs, which soon after broke out into
an.

an apparent *Leprosy*. He made use of many Able Physicians, but depended most on Doctor *John David Rhes*, a *Cambro-Britain*, who commenced Doctor at *Sienna*, profess'd Physick at *Padua*, was Practitioner in divers Parts of *Italy*, and afterwards in *England*. He was near Sixty Years of Age when Sir *Roger* consulted him. This Learned Man ran thro' all Remedies that Concern could suggest, or Art devise, without any Success or Ease to the Knight. He therefore advised him to lay the Case before the College of Physicians in *London*, which was stated very faithfully and learnedly by the aforesaid *Rhes*, and was carry'd up by Mr. *Thomas Beale*,
Steward

Saint Wenefride. 141

Steward of Sir *Roger's* Courts. The College at *London* being conven'd, the Case was read and debated, as also the Practice and Prescriptions of Doctor *Rhes*, which *Beale* deliver'd to them in Writing. They wrote back to Sir *Roger* their Opinion, that his *Physician* had hit right on his Disease, and had apply'd proper Remedies for a Cure, that he was a Person so eminently Learned, that they acknowledg'd themselves his Inferiors, he having been *Reader* to most of them; and if the Method he took, had no effect, there was *not in nature any Cure for him*. The Knight found not any satisfaction by the Answer, which was penned to the Commendation
of

of his Physician. Doctor *Rhes* being a *Roman Catholick*, advised his Patient to remove to Saint *Wenefride's* Well, to try, whether by the *Saint's* Intercession, he might not obtain a Cure, which was not in the power of Art to effect. He acquainted him with the Holiness of the Place, and what Miraculous Favors were there obtain'd. Sir *Roger*, extremely desirous of Health, obey'd his Physician, and undertook a painful Journey, full Seventy Eight *British* Miles, from *Rotherwas* to *Holy Well*. He bathed himself in the Miraculous Fountain, and became as sound and clean from all Scurf and Leprosy, as a Child newly born, and afterwards continued so. This
happen'd

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happen'd providentially ; for as *Naaman*, Captain General of *Syria*, was directed to wash in the River *Jordan*, which completed a Twofold Cure, of his Soul as well as of his Body *. In like manner the *Leper*, Sir *Roger*, came to wash in the Stream of *Holy Well*: He was not at that time a *Catholic*; but the Miraculous Cure, with other Motives of Credibility, induced him to embrace the True Faith, and he was reconciled to the Church of *Christ*; he rendred thanks and praises to Almighty God, for both these Favors. Besides this relation, which Sir *Roger* gave to the Lady his Wife, and to his Daughter in Law,

* 4 Kings. v.

and his W
Bray, John Henley,
more Attendants o
Bodenham.

The Omnipotent i
rify'd in His Saints,
ting Supernatural
their humble Petiti
His Sacred Throne,
Natural Causes. Sc
lievers (if H. Scriptu
declar'd otherwise) i
cribe the Wholesomen
Waters of Jericho, t
cult, Sudden, and S.

Saint Wenefride. 145

into the *Fountain* *. Worshippers of the Great God have different Sentiments, as will appear by the following Relation. In the Month of *December*, and the Year of our Lord, One Thousand, Six Hundred, and Thirty Seven, Mrs. *Jane Wakeman*, Wife to Mr. *John Wakeman*, of *Rougley*, in the Parish of *Horsbarnham*, and the County of *Sussex*, was tormented with a Sore Breast ; and having used all probable means for a Cure, she found no ease or prospect of growing better. The Ablest Surgeons concluded, that unless her Breast was cut off, there was not any other way to relieve her, neither would they by

H that

* 4 Reg. ii. 19.

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that Operation give assurance of a Recovery, for they verily believ'd that her Breast was Incurable, and to attempt the Amputation might hasten on the Gentlewoman's Death. They declar'd this to her Friends, but encourag'd her with better Hopes. Mrs. *Wakeman* regarded not their Opinion, with which she was privately acquainted, but resolv'd to have recourse to Heaven, and to undertake a Pilgrimage to Saint *Wenefride's* Well in *Flintshire*. She began her journey from *London* in the Month of *June*, One Thousand Six Hundred, and Thirty Eight, accompany'd by her said Husband; Mr. *Richard Wakeman*, his Brother;

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ne *Francis Nash*. She had at that time Two great Holes in her Breast under the Left Pap, which were seen both by *Catholicks* and *Protestants*. When he came into *Worcestershire*, to a Place call'd *Beeley*, she left here behind her all her Salves and Ointments, having a strong Faith and Hopes in Almighty God's Mercy, and in the Prayers of Blessed Saint *Wenefride*, that she would not have any further occasion of using them. She only apply'd Clean Linnen, to keep her Breast sweet; for the Corruption burst out in so great quantities, that it forced its way thro' many Folds, and ran down into her very Shoes. Her Breast left off running at her First

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Bathing in the *Holy Well*:
stayed One Night only in
Town, but went thrice in
the *Fountain*; and from
very *Instant* of finishing
Devotions, to her Dying Day
which was Five Years after
she never found any pain
in that Breast, nor any Sore,
Sign thereof, except a Little
Seam, to shew the Place where
the Two Holes were miracu-
lously closed up. She bore
afterwards Three Children, and
in drying up her Milk, found
that Breast least troublesome
which before had been ulcerous.
I have this Account in Mr
Wakeman's Hand Writing
which he gave, as a perpetual
Testimony of the Favor, and
also of the Passage which fol-
lows.

Saint Wenefride. 149

In the Year One Thousand, ix Hundred, and Thirty, the foresaid Mr. *Wakeman* of *Rouley*, &c. being at *Holy Well*, saw Man lying Dead, hard by the Well it self. This Profane Wretch, the Day before, had much derided and scoffed at Blessed Saint *Wenefride*, who suffer'd a glorious *Martyrdom* in defence of her *Virginity*: He also gave Abusive and *Uncivil* language, in the presence of Mr. *Wakeman*, to the *Pilgrims* who came thither to perform their Devotions. The *Coroner* was call'd, a Jury impanell'd, and the Body was view'd. After mature Deliberation they gave in this Verdict; *That God's Just Judgment was the Cause of his Death, for his uncivil*

H. 3

oil Carriage in that Place.
Thus Mr. *Wakeman* an Eye-Witness. I could add here the Names of such, who in the Year One Thousand, Six Hundred, and Thirty Seven, order'd the Image of Saint *Wenefride* to be defaced, and the Iron Bars to be taken away, which supported the Pious *Visitants* in the rapid Stream; how both he who commanded it, and those who executed his Orders, contrary to the persuasion of several moderate *Protestants*, were shortly after exemplarily punish'd by Uncommon Misfortunes and Disasters. Moreover, had I not confin'd my self to the Last Century, I could mention Precedents, more than sufficient,

Saint Wenefride. 151

ent, to caution Persons from being too forward in their Contempts of Saint *Wenefride* and her *Well*, which is sometimes severely taken notice of by Him, who has said, *He that touches you, toucheth the Apple of Mine Eye* *. But let us return from this Digression, if it may be call'd so.

The Infinite Wisdom of God thinks fit, not to work Miracles by the Intercession of His *Saints*, in all Places, nor towards all Persons, but as it pleaseth Him †. The greatest Wonders are wrought at Saint *Wenefride's Well*, but I relate here a Cure at a great distance, which tends much to the Glory of our *Saint*. In the Month

H. 4

of

* Zach. ii. 8. † S. Aug. *Epist.* 137.

of *June*, and the Year of our Lord, One Thousand, Six Hundred, and Forty Seven, the *Wife* of *John Clec*, Gardiner in the Suburbs of the City of *Worcester*, being Diseased, undertook on foot a journey to *Holy Well*, hoping to find there the recovery of her Health. Passing thro' *Kidderminster*, in her way to *Flintshire*, she call'd at her Cousin *Anthony Cooke's* House. Having refresh'd herself, she acquainted her Cousin with the Occasion of this her *Pilgrimage*. The long Discourse on the Subject of *Holy Well*, was overheard by a Sick Woman, who lay in the Next Room. This poor Creature had continued Bedrid Six or Seven Years; she was always
Lame,

Saint Wenefride. 153

Lame, and had been put upon the said *Cook* (who was a *Linnen Weaver*) to be maintain'd at the Charge of the Parish. Just as the *Pilgrim* was taking leave, and ready to set forwards, the *Bedrid Woman* cry'd out to speak with her: The Business was this; She desir'd her for the Passion of *Christ*, to carry for her a Single Penny (which she gave her) to *Holy Well*, and to bestow it on the First Poor Body she there happen'd to meet, humbly desiring that Party to go into the Well for her, and to pray that she might have the use of her Limbs. This was promis'd and perform'd.

The Poor Widow's *Two Mites*, cast into the Treasury

H 5 of

of the *Temple*, were so acceptable to the *Searcher of Hearts*, that He declar'd *She had given more than all together* *. For it was her Whole Personal Estate. The opulent *Scribes* and *Pharisees* might fling in Handfuls of Gold, they found no want; this Poor Creature bestow'd on her God, what seem'd necessary to relieve her self, perchance she saying at the same time with a flaming Heart, *Lord ! If I was Mistress of the Two Worlds, as I am of these Two Mites, they should be employ'd to Your Honor*. S. *Wenefride* accepted the *Sing'le Penny* sent to her *Well*, with so great Faith and Devotion; 'twas all the *Bedrid Woman* had to present her with.

Clec's.

* Luke xxi. 3.

Saint Wenefride: 155

Elec's Wife having remain'd at her Journey's End Six or Seven Days, return'd homewards, and coming to *Kidderminster*, she call'd at her Cousin *Cooke's* House, where to her great astonishment, she saw the *Lame, Bedrid Woman*, perfectly recover'd, and inquiring at what time she became sound, 'twas computed, that on that Day, and the very Hour, when the *Single Penny* was deliver'd at *Holy Well*, the *Bedrid Woman* arose, walk'd round the House, and abroad, to the Admiration of the whole *Parish*. This Miraculous Change at so great distance, could not be the Product of a *Cold Bath*. This Passage was diligently examin'd by *Mr. James Bridges*, who

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who had *Anthony Cooke* and *Clec's* Wife before him, who both attested the Truth of what is here related. In Testimony whereof *Mr. Bridges* recorded the same in his own Hand Writing. This was the worthy Gentleman, who being *Sheriff* of *Worcester* proclaim'd there the King in the Year 1651, for which he suffer'd much from the Rebels, and with difficulty escaped the Gallows.

A languishing Patient, perplexes the Physician, and Distempers radicated from Infancy, causes him to fling aside his Books, and to dismiss the hopes of a Cure. This seem'd the Case of *Mrs. Mary Numan*, Wife of *Mr. Hugh Numan*,
man,

***Saint Wenefride.* i 57**

man, who was Clerk to Sir *Jeremy Smith*, then Captain of one of His Majesty's Men of War. At Five Years of age, by an Ague and Fever, she was reduced to that Lameness and Impotence, that for the term of Eighteen Years she was not able to stand or point a Foot to the Ground: Her Arm Bones were so much out of their natural places, that one reach'd over, and interfer'd with the other, and the Bones of her Legs were so dislocated, that they extended some Inches behind those of the Thighs. Being in this miserable condition, and having considerable Friends at Court, she made her application and address unto them. By their Interest, she had

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had the opinion of all the *King's* Physicians, who declar'd, that naturally *she was Incurable*. Hereupon she was touch'd by the *King*, but it pleas'd God not to restore her to Health. She was Two Summers and One Winter at the *Bath* in *Sommerfetshire*, and at other Places in *England* Famous for Cures, as also at Three *Wells* in *Scotland*; altho' she could not make any other shift for her self, than with great Difficulty and Pain, to crawl a little upon her Knees. She was carry'd into *France*, and was put thrice into the Second Grape-Press, in divers Parts of that Kingdom. She was touch'd at *Paris* by the *French King*: In *Flanders* she visited

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ited *Sichem* and other Places of Devotion ; she was Eighteen Weeks at *Aquisgrane* : In *Holland* she had the Advice of an *Italian* Prince, Famous for his skill in Physick. To be brief, he was conducted to the Baths in *Portugal* ; all which Journeys were for the most part at the *King of England's* Expence, but not to any Effect or Alteration in the Cripple. 'Tis true, she had been formerly twice at *Saint Wenefride's Well*, without any Amendment, yet had an earnest desire and strong impulse to make a *Third Pilgrimage* : She was comforted with these inviting Thoughts, both awake and sleeping. Wherefore, towards the Latter End of *May*,
in

On the Fourth of *April*, One Thousand, Six Hundred, and Sixty Six, about Five of Clock in the Afternoon, *Hugh* the Son of *Thomas Williams*, of the Parish of *Whitford* in the County of *Flint* Yeoman, a Boy of Eight Years and Nine Months old, having a Body of just Proportion in each Part to the Height of his Stature, which was Four Foot, and playing with one of his School-fellows near the Mill, which stands but at a little distance from the Holy *Fountain*, he attempted to skip over the Water, but came short of the other Side, and dropp'd into the Current, where 'tis most impetuous, Three Yards from the Great Water-Wheel, and

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was immediately carry'd out of sight. The Standers by gave him for lost, as prudently supposing, that besides the evident Danger of drowning, he would be crush'd to death: For betwixt the Wheel and the Paved Bottom of the Channel under it, there is not the space of Two Inches, yet he was suddenly convey'd into the Ditch beyond the aforesaid Wheel. His Companion seeing the sad Accident, and knowing nothing of his Safety, rais'd a Mournful Loud Cry, which so alarm'd the *Master* and Forty Scholars, that they all ran out of School, to learn the Occasion of it. The *Miller* also, and others, were in the same fright; but one *William Bowen*, who was

was standing with an Angling Rod Four Yards below the Wheel, espy'd him endeavouring to creep out of the Ditch, and complaining that he had lost his Shoe. The Boy was taken into a House, and that moment a Surgeon was call'd : His Body being examin'd, the Youth was found not to have receiv'd any Crush or Contusion, except a little Skin ruffled off one Ankle, as a Mark to declare what would have become of him, if he had not been miraculously preserv'd.

Cornelius, the Son of *John Nicholas*, of the Parish of *Tre-maine*, in the County of *Cardigan*, about Two Miles distant from *Cardigan* Town, being a Young Man of Seventeen Years

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Years of age, both Fatherless and Motherless, entred into Service with his Aunt. On the One and Twentieth of *December*, One Thousand, Six Hundred, and Seventy Three, a little before Night, he was struck with so great a Weakness by a sudden Blast, finding racking Pains from his Knees downwards, that he was not able to go or stand. Several Remedies were used, as Ointments, Plaisters, Cutting and Lancing about the Toes and Ancles, to the very Bones. They continued this Method till towards *Easter*, but finding them insignificant, and that they were rather prejudicial to him, 'twas resolv'd to convey him to Saint *Wenefride's*

fride's Well. His Relations were Indigent, and having no other means, he was recommended to the Charity of Good People, from Door to Door, on a Hand-Barrow. The *Welsh* distinguish themselves from other Nations, by a Cheerfulness in assisting those in great Necessity : They knew whither the Cripple was to be carry'd, and on what account, therefore they lent helping hands, that he might finish a Journey of Ninety Miles. He was brought to *Holy Well* on the Eleventh of *June*, and early Next Morning was put into the *Fountain*, being *Friday* in *Whitson-week*. No sooner was he in the Water, than he found himself perfectly recover'd ;

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he walk'd in the *Well*, out of it, and ever after continued in good health, to the admiration of all those, who had been Spectators of his former miserable Condition. Glory be to God, Who is *Wonderful in His Saints*.

It carries a sort of Demonstration for Miracles, when those who obstinately oppose them, are constrain'd to own them. Amongst the rest, perchance there are none more positive in their Erroneous Opinions, than those Men call'd *Quakers*. They deny absolutely the Divine Efficacy of *Baptismal Water*, but the flowing Fountain of Saint *Wenefride* prevail'd with *Roger Whetstone* to renounce his Heresy, and by
Holy

Holy *Baptism* to become a devout *Christian Catholick*. This *Roger* by Education a *Quaker*, by Profession a Taylor, dwelling in *Sidmore*, within the Parish of *Bromesgrave*, in *Worcestershire*, at Sixty Years of age, was visited with a violent Infirmary, which disabled him to such a degree, that he could not feed himself. He was confin'd to his Bed Seventeen Weeks, after which he found an Abatement of the severe Pains, which before ran through his whole Body. He was so weak, when able to rise, that he could not put his hand to any Work, but halting on Crutches, he begged his bread, from Door to Door. Having continued *Three Years* in
this

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this sad Misery, he was told by a *Flintshire* Man, dwelling in his Neighborhood, that at a Place in his Country, call'd *Wenefride's Well*, great numbers of Lame Persons, and Diseas'd, were frequently, after a miraculous manner, restored to Health. It came into the *Quaker's* Mind, suggested by a better *Spirit* than commonly guided him, that the *Lord* would help him at that *Fountain*. In this he was so confident, that not the least Doubt occur'd to the contrary. Wherefore, in the Year One Thousand, Six Hundred, and Sixty Seven, he began his journey on Crutches, attended by a Young Girl, his Daughter; and after many Days Travel,

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he came to *Holy Well* about Noon, on the Twenty Eighth Day of *August*, in the afore-
 Year. He could not be induced to wash in the *Well*, though he had a smattering of Popery and Supeftition, but fitting down by the Side of it, he drank a Cup of the Water, and he came away as it were in a Trance. Returnding to himself, he desired another Dish of the same Water, and having drunk it he threw away Both Crutches, and found himfelf *strangely, suddenly, and perfectly cured*. He walk'd round the *Well*, dropping many Tears of Joy, to join the Stream of the Miraculous Spring. The Power and Goodness of *St. Wenefride's Heavenly Spirit*

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placed the Miracle out of the reach of Cavil and Dispute, by healing an Old Cripple in a minute, with Two Draughts of Water. Another higher Cure was wrought in the Soul of this *Quaker*; for giving attention to the Inspirations of the *Holy Ghost*, and an impartial ear to the *Motives of Belief*, he embraced the *Roman Catholick Faith*. He and his Son (Eleven Years of age) received the Holy Sacrament of Baptism, at which the greatest Quality of that County were pleased to stand *Patrines*.

Were it not to offer a needless Repetition of what is said already, I would set down at large the Attestation of *Robert Hill*, a most rigid *Quaker*, which

which lies now before me, concerning the Truth of the aforesaid Miracle. Have patience at least with some part of it, as he words it. I Robert Hill, of the County of Worcester, having lately been Overseer of the Poor of the Parish of Bromesgrave, within the said County, and now a Near Inhabitant of the said Town, do testify, That I am, and have been well acquainted with Roger Wilton, alias Whetstone, of about Sixty Years of age, Taylor, Dweller in the same Town; and that I knew him for these Three Last Years, Lame and Infirm, that he could not work at his Trade, nor go without Crutches, and so feeble, that he was not able to feed himself—
(Hill makes here a recital of
his

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his Ten Days Journey, and of his sudden Cure at the *Well*, as *Whetstone* related the same to him; then adds) *For my own part, I can well say that I knew him Infirm and Lane, often coming, in these Late Years, on his Crutches, to beg at my Door; and now being return'd from Holy Well, is very Strong, and well able to work at his Trade, to the great Wonder of the Inhabitants of Bromesgrave, some whereof, presently upon his return, being Lane and Infirm, came to Holy Well, in hopes to be also cured; and upon their return they reported to me, that they were better in health than formerly, &c. — In witness hereto I put my hand, the Second Day of October, 1667. ROBERT HILL.*
In the same Account the said

Robert Hill declares, how his own Lame Girl, of Fourteen Years of age, was cured, by only *making use of Holy Well Water.*

I could bring a *Cloud of Witnesses* (to use *Saint Paul's* Expression *) asserting other Undeniable Miracles, wrought by *Saint Wenefride's* Intercession, not in an obscure Corner, but *in the face of the Sun.* I solemnly declare, that I leave behind twice as many Wonders, happening in the Last Century, of which many were Eye-Witnesses at the Holy Fountain. *Holy Well* seems to resemble, in some sort, the *Probatika* Pond, where, in Five Porches, there lay a great *Multitude*

* Heb. xii. 1.

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itude of Sick Persons, of Blind, Lame, and Wither'd *. In the Travelling Season the Town appears populous, crowded with zealous *Pilgrims*, from all Parts of *Britain*. The *Well* it self receives a succession of *Visitants* from Sun-Rise till Late at Night. The many Hand-Barrows and Crutches, which have been hung at the Pillars, demonstrate the Mercies of *God*, and the Powerful Intercession of the *Virgin-Martyr*. They are soon remov'd by those who envy the Glory of our *Saint*. I forbear to recount at large the Recovery of Blindish Eyes, of Barren Women becoming fruitful, of inveterate violent Convulsions suddenly

* *St. John, v. 3.*

internal Torments of Hell,
not be forc'd away by the
rial Elements of a Cold
These and many others
Last Age I omit, not to in
the Price and Bulk of a P
Book, as also that it may
dy to wait on those, to w
is dedicated. S. *Augustin*,
xii Book of the *City of God*
ting of a Blind Man, who
ved sight, and of other M
anulat

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menſo Populo Teſte, res geſta eſt, A vaſt Concourse of People were able to atteſt the Truth of them; which is exactly our preſent Caſe.

I conclude with the Divine Meſſage the Son of God ſent to His *Precuſſor* in Priſon, to confirm the Diſciples of the *Baptiſt*, and to confound the obdurate *Jews*, which with profound Humility, and the greateſt Deference imaginable, may be apply'd to our glorious *Patroneſs of Wales*, by what you read in this admirable Life. *Go and report that the Blind ſee, the Lamewalk, the Lepers are made clean, the Deaf hear, the Dead riſe again, to the Poor the Goſpel is preach'd**. The Omnipotence and Goodneſs of our Great God beador'd and prais'd, by all *Angels and Saints, for ever. Amen, Amen.* (* S. Mat. xi. v.) A

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